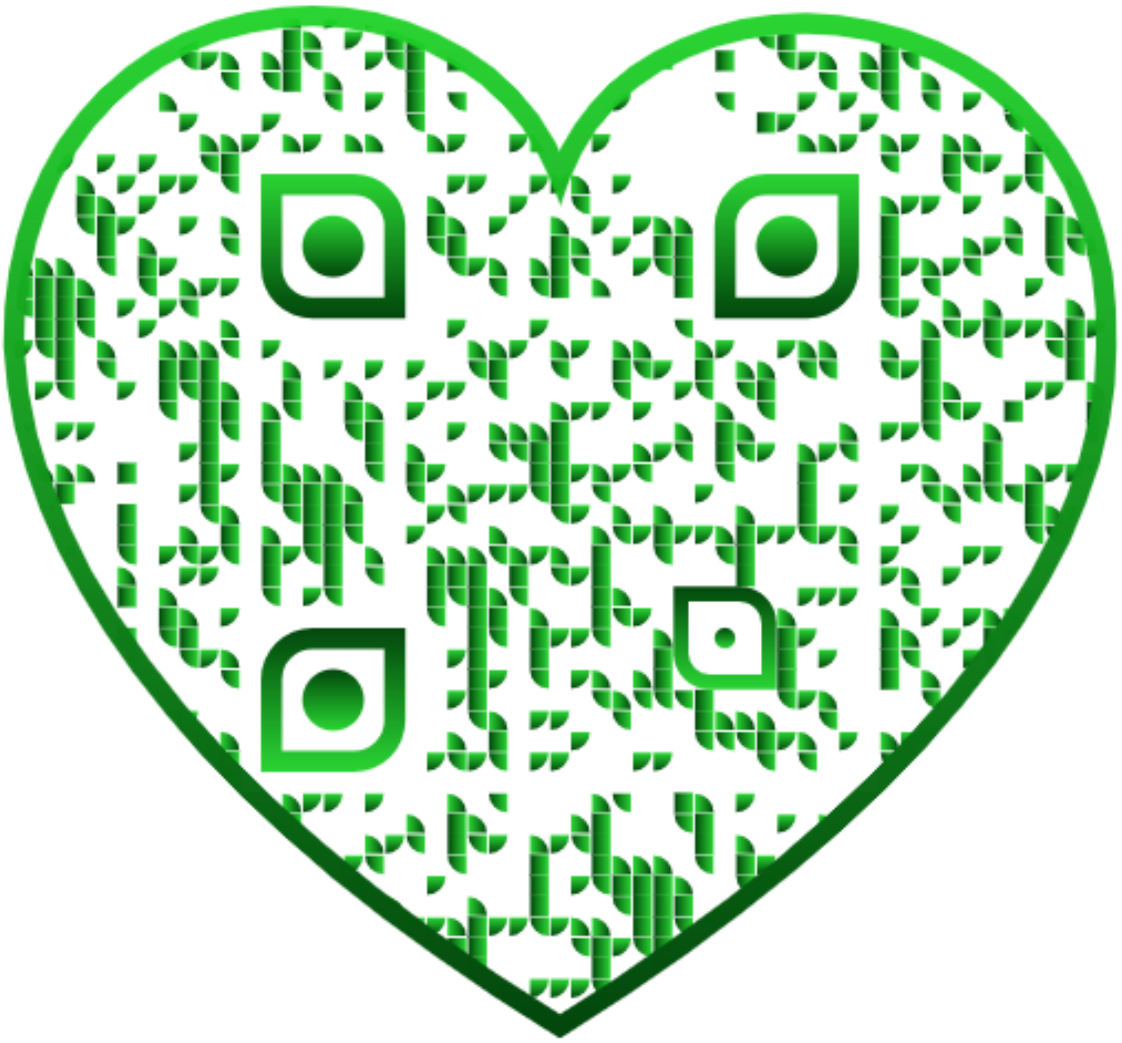
relix

44

Issue 290 / September 2018
$6.99 www.relix.com



GRATEFUL DEAD

PACIFIC NORTHWEST '73-'74: THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS

THE FRUITS OF A GLORIOUS TIME AND A GLORIOUS PLACE!

SIX FULL SHOWS • 19 CDs

PORTLAND • SEATTLE • VANCOUVER

INDIVIDUALLY NUMBERED, LIMITED EDITION OF 15,000

DEAD.NET

ALSO AVAILABLE

PACIFIC NORTHWEST '73-'74: BELIEVE IT IF YOU NEED IT

3-CD SET

RHINO

© 2018 Rhino Entertainment,
A Warner Music Group Company.

THE BIG WEEKEND

CHICAGO, IL
OCT. 4TH-6TH

THE BIG
BOOZY BRUNCH
SATURDAY
OCTOBER 6TH

FIVE VENUES • THREE NIGHTS • ONE BIG WEEKEND

UMPHREY'S MCGEE • LETTUCE • EMANCIPATOR ENSEMBLE

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

AMY HELM • LEFTOVER SALMON • THE MOTET

PAPDOSIO • THE REVOLUTION • THE RUSS LIQUID TEST

SPAFFORD • SUNSQUABI

VIP PACKAGES BY

CID ENTERTAINMENT

Multi-show ticket bundles w/ EXCLUSIVE PERKS
including (where available):
Early Entry • Soundcheck Access
VIP Viewing Area w/ Private Waitstaff
1st Access to Tickets for Saturday "Boozy Brunch"

TICKETS & INFO AT WWW.THEBIGWEEKEND.NET

silver wrapper · LIVE NATION · A JAM PRODUCTION · HEADCOUNT MUSIC • DEMOCRACY • ACTION · relix

JOHN POPPER

- Special 20 -

I Smooth, comfortable mouthpiece I
I Durable comb I
I Versatile, warm sound I

play the Original!

BLUES TRAVELER
returns with
HURRY UP & HANG AROUND
out October 12

Visit bluestraveler.com
for album pre-order
and tour info

HOHNER

ENJOY MUSIC

get the full experience at
www.hohner.de

Photo: © Michael Weintrob

AN ALL-INCLUSIVE VACATION FEATURING FOUR NIGHTS OF WIDESPREAD PANIC!

WIDESPREAD PANIC

Panic en la Playa

OCHO

JANUARY 25-29, 2019 • HARD ROCK HOTEL • RIVIERA MAYA, MEXICO

Late Night Shows

PLAYA ALLSTARS [x2]

FEAT: ERIC KRASNO • GEORGE PORTER JR. • IVAN NEVILLE • CYRIL NEVILLE
TERENCE HIGGINS • CHEME GASTELUM • MARK MULLINS • LESLIE MENDELSON

NORTH MISSISSIPPI ALLSTARS • BONERAMA

Sunset Shows

BLOODKIN [x2] • KALU AND THE ELECTRIC JOINT

LIMITED ALL-INCLUSIVE ROOMS AVAILABLE

PANICENLAPLAYA.COM

a Cloud 9 Adventure

relix
V45 NO6

WHY 44?

That's a fair question.

Without distracting you by invoking the various professional athletes who wore that number (Hank Aaron, Reggie Jackson, John Riggins, Jerry West, Danny Ainge) or mentioning the 44th President of the United States (Mr. Barack Hussein Obama) or even the colorful fact that 44 is the number of Hanukkah candles in a standard box, let me point to the fall of 1974 when *Relix* debuted.

OK, technically, it was called *Dead Relix*, but that first issue appeared 44 years ago, featuring a tongue-in-cheek coverline dedication to "the world's sneakiest tape collector—Tricky Dicky" (Richard Nixon resigned on Aug. 9, 1974 in the aftermath of allegations regarding his cover-up of the Watergate break-in, which he could not deny due to the results of the secret taping system he had installed in the Oval Office).

So to mark our 44 years of publication, we are celebrating 44 people, places and things that entertain and enthrall us (Technically 45, thanks to John Mayer's Olympia SM3 but if we're using 1974 as our starting point, then a typewriter is certainly a sound bonus.)

Making a list of this sort invariably leads one to consider various numeric milestones. One of these hits quite close to home. Come to think of it, on my browser it hits precisely home because that button takes me to Jambands.com, which turns 20 years old in September.

As I now think about it, we've had quite a run.

In the very first "From the Editor" section of what we initially published on a monthly schedule, my "Opening Riffs" announced, "This is an interesting, exhilarating moment. I've been a rabid live-music fan for quite some time now (and) more than any time I can recall, there is a swell of groups committed to the art of improvisation. We intend to spread the good word with Jambands.com."

And so we have, with over 58,000 pieces of individual content in the back end of the site, stretching all the way to that very first monthly issue, which evolved into a daily resource within the year, thanks to the addition of full-time employee number two, News Editor Jeff Waful, in the fall of 1999. Jefferson, who most of you know as the lighting designer for Umphrey's McGee, anchored an editorial staff I selected from friends and familiar voices on various message boards whose bylines you'll now find in the pages of *Relix* and beyond, including: Jesse Jarnow, Benjy Eisen and David "ZZYZX" Steinberg. I would also be remiss if I did not acknowledge Andy Gadiel, who supplied all the initial work on the technical side, before branching off to launch JamBase. Another early contributor was my present-day fellow Relix editor Mike Greenhaus, who submitted CD reviews from the wilds of Skidmore College.

All told, I believe that much of the jam-scene journalism today originated in part with what we did on Jambands.com. Don't believe me? Fire up the ol' Wayback Machine and take a look at those early issues of the site, which also led to very first Jambands.com Tour (the roster included The Slip—featured in this very issue as one of the Relix 44—along with the Disco Biscuits, Percy Hill, Deep Banana Blackout and Schleigho, as well as special guests Butch Trucks and Oteil Burbridge) and the Jammys (which I created alongside then-Wetlands Preserve owner and current *Relix* publisher Peter Shapiro). By the way, if you want to take a gander at the very first issue of Jambands.com, here's my pro tip: Since the Wayback Machine didn't start archiving us for a few months, jump ahead to the snapshot from January 1999 where you can access September 1998 via the dropdown menu.

As I think back to the Jambands.com launch, beyond the thrill of inviting like-minded listeners to join us on the venture, my other major memory of the time period is awaiting the birth of my daughter Caroline, which followed in February 1999. As readers of this space may recall, she later made a cameo appearance for a backstage photo op with Butch and Oteil during one of the stops on the Jambands.com tour.

I am pleased to report that the Jamband circle of life continues, as on July 26, a few weeks before our site turned 20, Mike Greenhaus and Amy Jacques welcomed their son Jackson Buckley Greenhaus to the world. (Mike and Amy met at *Relix*, where Amy has since become our longstanding copy editor.)

I'm sure that in 2038 when Mike is writing about the Relix 64, he'll look back and share a glorious story or two.

Until then, it's mazel tovs all around.

DEAN BUDNICK
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Publisher Peter Shapiro

Editors-in-Chief
Dean Budnick & Mike Greenhaus

Associate Editor Matt Inman

Copy Editor Amy Jacques

Assistant Editor Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Proofreader Sonia Weiser

Editor-at-Large Jaan Uhelszki

Editor Emeritus Josh Baron

Contributing Editors Tim Donnelly, Jesse Jarnow, Richard B. Simon, Jeff Tamarkin

Art Direction & Design Paperplane

Production Artist
Carol Bobolts/Red Herring Design

Contributing Writers Devon Allman, John Adamian, Mike Ayers, Stephen Bloch, Philip Booth, Benjy Eisen, Angélique Kidjo, John Patrick Gatta, Richard Gehr, Ron Hart, Justin Jacobs, Ethan Miller, Bill Murphy, J. Poet, Ryan Reed, Larson Sutton, Chad Weisman, Jason P. Woodbury, Emily ~~Zem~~ler, Lee Zimmerman

---

Contributing Photographers Stephen Bloch, Alisa B. Cherry, John Patrick Gatta, Taylor Hill, Benoit Rousseau, Farah Sosa

---

Associate Publisher, Senior Vice President ~~Rac~~hel Seiden Baron

Vice President, Partnerships & Events Josh Rowe

Sales Executive Connor Falvey

Sales Executive Albert Mizrahi

Special Projects David Nussbaum

Manager, Ad Operations Carly Field

Director, Sponsorship & Sales Josh Bailin

Sponsorship Coordinator Sam Sklover

Marketing Director; Executive Assistant to the Publisher Bradley Tucker

Marketing Coordinator Harrison Ezratty

Administrative Coordinator Alec Ifshin

Director, Sales & Business Development
Mallory Factor, mallory@hear-there.com

Chief Financial Officer Dale Hirschman

Online Video Director Brian Stollery

Vice President, Relix Media Group
Mike Greenhaus

Interns Extraordinaire
Chelsea Booth, Isabella Fretel, Gabby Strang (editorial); Sophie Crowe, Caitlin Grant, Sam Jacobson, Nicole Kaufman, Conner Klein, Daniel Schantz, Chuck Weinstein (marketing); Ethan Halpern (design); Matt Field. Kailah Korsh, Kacie Paganelli (sales and advertising); Samantha Ross (Hear & There); Clara Fournier (digital media); Will Schwerd (video)

Subscription information including change of address and missing issues:

USA toll free: 1-215-458-8541

CANADA: (011) + 1-914-962-6292
International: (011) + 1-914-962-6292
Fax: (011) + 1-212-868-4356
Mail: *Relix* Magazine, Customer Service,
P.O. Box 3111, Langhorne, PA 19047,

Sorry, no subscription cancellations accepted.

Relix Main Office
104 W. 29th St, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Relix Main Office: (011) + 1-646-230-0100
Advertising Sales: (011) + 1-646-674-1745
Fax: (011) + 1-646-230-0200
Email: advertising@relix.com
Website: www.relix.com
Banner Advertising
and Promotions: advertising@relix.com

Relix (USPS 401-850) is published bi-monthly—except in March, August, September and December, it's published monthly—by Relix Media Group LLC, 104 W. 29th St, 11th Floor, New York, NY, 10001. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send change of address notifications to *Relix* Magazine, Customer Service, P.O. Box 3111, Langhorne, PA 19047.

Ride-along enclosed

Relix accepts all major credit cards, money orders issued in U.S. funds, and personal checks drawn on U.S. bank accounts. Please make payable to Relix Media Group LLC. Current subscriptions rates: USA-$25.00 for one year (8 issues). Canada/International-$39.95 for one year (8 issues).

Select back issues are available at www.relix.com.

All contents copyright © 2018 by Relix Media Group LLC.
All rights reserved.

Relix Media Group LLC does not assume responsibility for material presented in the magazine, nor are the opinions expressed in Relix necessarily those of the management.

All rights reserved. Parts of this book may not be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system including computer systems without permission in writing from the publisher beforehand.

All manuscripts, photos, artwork or material of any kind submitted are agreed to be "works for hire" and become the total property of *Relix* and are not returnable unless agreed on in writing, in advance, by the publisher and solicitor in any form unless other specific arrangements have been made in advance in writing. Material may be edited at the discretion of the editors. To be properly credited and reimbursed, all submissions, including photographs, must be properly marked with name, address and phone number of author/artist/photographer. Payment is at the full discretion of the publisher.

Relix does not assume responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, photos or illustrations.

relix

Printed in the USA

Relix is a registered trademark of Relix Media Group LLC.

Jambands.com is a registered trademark of Relix Media Group LLC.

"Music is medicine. It heals. It lifts people up.
Songs for the Saints isn't about the destruction of Hurricanes Irma & Maria,
it's eleven songs about the human spirit, the resilience of those islands
and the joy the people of the Saints find even in the worst times."
– Kenny Chesney

SONGS FOR THE SAINTS
Featuring Ziggy Marley, Mindy Smith + Jimmy Buffett
An album about the places that save you...

"...a thoughtful,
mostly acoustic-driven release
that resonates with love and renewal."
– The Chicago Tribune

Love for Love City was founded to help rebuild the Saints
ALL Proceeds from *Songs for the Saints* go directly to the Fund

CONTENTS

SEPTEMBER 2018

Follow us at

- @Relixmag
- @Relix
- @Relixmag
- Relix Video
- Relix Magazine

FEATURES

38 | The *Relix* 44

Relix was founded in 1974 as a Grateful Dead fanzine, originally focusing on the vibrant Bay Area music scene. Although our connection to the GD Family and their improvisational ethos remains as strong as ever, these days, we are also excited to cover the best live music from around the globe, regardless of genre. So, in celebration of our 44th anniversary, we are proud to present a comprehensive look at the people, places and things—as well as tastes, trends and tunes—that guide us today. From **Miles Davis**' *A Tribute to Jack Johnson*, **Mike Gordon**'s 52-minute "Foam" with **The Duo**, House of Yes' jamband roots, **Kim Gordon**'s psychedelic picks and **Patrick Hallahan**'s favorite festival foods to **Dave Matthews Band**'s new keyboardist, a mini-**Byrds** reunion, and **Phil Lesh** and **Bob Weir**'s go-to percussionist to the 50th anniversaries of *Anthem of the Sun* and *Music from Big Pink*, everything on this list helps defines *Relix* over four decades since our first issue.

RELIX MAGAZINE (USPS 401-850) is published bi-monthly—except in March, August, September and December, when it's published monthly—by Relix Media Group LLC, 104 W. 29th St., 11th Floor, New York, NY, 10001. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send change of address notifications to Relix Magazine, Customer Service, P.O. Box 567, Selmer, TN 38375-9907.

DEPARTMENTS

8 **Dear Relix**
Letters, comments and more

10 **The Beat**
Eaux Claires

11 **Global Beat**
M.A.K.U Soundsystem

12 **Soundcheck**
Live reviews and news from around the globe

16 **Festival Guide: Encore**
The final installment of our annual listings and Sounds of the Summer

21 **Blues Route**
Walter "Wolfman" Washington

22 **Track by Track**
White Denim's *Performance*

23 **Spotlight**
Chris Harford, Magic City Hippies

26 **Behind the Scene**
Founders Entertainment's Jordan Wolowitz

27 **Reflections**
Tower of Power

28 **On The Verge**
5 artists you should know about

31 **My Page**
A look into the mind of Howlin Rain's Ethan Miller

32 **At Work**
Caroline Rose, Iceage

33 **The Core**
Nicki Bluhm

34 **Tour Diary**
Devon Allman checks in from the road with Duane Betts, Dickey Betts and his own project

36 **Interview**
Neil & Liam Finn

60 **Reviews**
New album releases, plundering the vaults and more

80 **Parting Shots**
Ray Davies

ON JAMBANDS.COM

Quick hits from our sister site

"With Jeff [Coffin], we got into a real groove version of the band. It was a different pocket and a particular time; but with Howard Levy, it's like an explosive situation where he's constantly digging and pushing in a way that brings out things in us that don't come out in any other setting." **Béla Fleck** on reuniting the original Flecktones.

"I'll always remember his genius, his ridiculous sense of humor and how much of a legend he was. He will be missed. The times I've had with him will never be forgotten and will always be inspiring." **Marco Benevento** on the late Richard Swift.

"'Do You Realize?' has changed us more—and made us more who we are—than the other way around. There's hardly a day that goes by where I don't talk to someone who's said, 'That's the song that we played at our wedding' or 'That's the song that we played when my mother died' or 'That's the song that we played when my brother was dying of cancer.'" **Wayne Coyne** on how The Flaming Lips' music has changed over time.

"After witnessing events like Phish's Baker's Dozen, where they went 13 nights at MSG without repeating one song, you know by now that every day with Trey brings a change in song focus. It's rarely a band decision. All you can do is hold on and try not to fall off." **Tony Markellis** on the mix of Phish songs, unexpected covers and bust outs that have filled Trey Anastasio Band's recent setlists.

"My attitude toward it is that I was in a band called Yes that I joined in 1972. I've been in that band for over 46 years, and I'm still in the same band. I didn't change anything about what I do. I just carry on doing what I started doing. Everybody else around us, other than Chris Squire, went off and did other things. Chris and [I] were basically the core of it. I'm really satisfied musically." **Alan White** on the current state of Yes.

"It doesn't feel like it's dated so much. It just feels different. I can still remember the person that I was who made it." **Tom Gray** on playing Gomez's *Bring It On* 20 years later.

ON RELIX.COM

We are sad to report that **Mike Winters**, who founded Manny's Car Wash with his brother Brad, worked as a manager at The Capitol Theatre and was a staple of the live-music scene for decades, passed away in July.

"Brad and Mike were Deadheads that somehow got control of a live-music bar," guitarist Jimmy Vivino told Relix.com. "They made us—all who played there—feel like we were getting away with something. Jamming and sit-ins were encouraged and happened nightly like no other bar in Manhattan." Derek Trucks also paid tribute to Winters by opening a recent performance in Hartford, Conn., with a take on the Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter classic "Ripple."

A photo gallery from the show—which featured Allman Brothers co-founder and area resident Jaimoe on drums throughout the night—is available online.

Introducing The Relix Audio Hour

The Relix Audio Hour is a podcast supplement to *Relix* magazine. A unique audio experience for music fans of all varieties, it will present everything from exclusive interviews to concert and album reviews in a compact, easily listenable format.

"This is a podcast for music lovers like you and me, and we hope to turn you on to some cool things along the way," host/producer Jesse Lauter explains in "Episode 1."

Now available via Google Play, iTunes, Simplecast and Stitcher Audio, our debut episode has something for everyone: Leon Bridges discusses the making of his highly anticipated album, *Good Thing*, with Bill Murphy; contributing writer Jesse Jarnow reviews Bob Weir & Phil Lesh's recent tour, where they "stripped-down" the Grateful Dead catalog with guests Trey Anastasio and Larry Campbell; and finally, Phish songwriter Tom Marshall and RJ Bee explain their new venture, the Osiris Podcast Network. Our theme music is provided courtesy of Marco Benevento.

KAMASI WASHINGTON

HEAVEN AND EARTH

SEP 23- VIEJAS ARENA - SAN DIEGO*
SEP 25 - HOLLYWOOD BOWL - LOS ANGELES*
SEPT 26 - HOLLYWOOD BOWL - LOS ANGELES*
SEP 29 - PAVILION AT TOYOTA MUSIC FACTORY - DALLAS*
SEP 30 - THE CYNTHIA WOODS MITCHELL PAVILION - THE WOODLANDS*
OCT 9 - BARCLAYS CENTER - BROOKLYN*
OCT 17 - THE SHOWBOX - SEATTLE
OCT 18 - CRYSTAL BALLROOM - PORTLAND
OCT 19 - THE WARFIELD - SAN FRANCISCO
OCT 20 - FREMONT THEATER - SAN LUIS OBISPO
OCT 21 - MARQUEE THEATRE - TEMPE
OCT 22 - MEOW WOLF - SANTA FE
OCT 24 - THE COMPLEX - SALT LAKE CITY
OCT 25 - BELLY UP - ASPEN
OCT 26 - OGDEN THEATRE - DENVER

OCT 27 - BOULDER THEATRE - BOULDER
OCT 29 - THE TRUMAN - KANSAS CITY
OCT 31 - ENGLERT CIVIC THEATRE - IOWA CITY
NOV 1 - PALACE THEATRE - ST PAUL
NOV 2 - THE SYLVEE - MADISON
NOV 3 - RIVIERA THEATRE - CHICAGO
NOV 5 - SONY CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS - TORONTO
NOV 7 - STATE THEATRE - PORTLAND
NOV 8 - ROYALE - BOSTON
NOV 9 - ELECTRIC FACTORY - PHILADELPHIA
NOV 10 - LINCOLN THEATRE - WASHINGTON
NOV 14 - THE NATIONAL - RICHMOND
NOV 15 - THE RITZ - RALEIGH
NOV 16 - MARATHON MUSIC WORKS - NASHVILLE
NOV 17 - BUCKHEAD THEATRE - ATLANTA

*SUPPORTING FLORENCE + THE MACHINE

DEAR RELIX

Here's what readers are talking about online and offline

DEAR RELIX

104 West 29th Street,
11th Floor
New York, NY
10001

Relix reserves the right to edit submissions, which may be published or otherwise used in any medium. All submissions become the property of *Relix* magazine.

Send your thoughts to letters@relix.com.

DANNY KIRWAN: 1950-2018

Danny Kirwan, the former guitarist for Fleetwood Mac, passed away on June 8. He was 68. Kirwan served as a member of the group from 1968-1972, appearing on Then Play On, Blues Jam at Chess, Kiln House, Future Games *and* Bare Trees *during the group's pre-Buckingham/Nicks period. "Danny was a huge force in our early years," Mick Fleetwood wroteon behalf of the band. "His love for the blues led him to being asked to join Fleetwood Mac in 1968, where he made his musical home for many years. Danny's true legacy, in my mind, will forever live on in the music he wrote and played so beautifully, as a part of the foundation of Fleetwood Mac, that has now endured for over 50 years. Thank you, Danny Kirwan. You will forever be missed!"*

RIP Danny!

Sam Saraa via Facebook

Little known fact: Phil Lesh wrote "Passenger" as an "answer song" to Danny Kirwan's "Station Man."

Bill Brina via Jambands.com

Sorry to hear of Danny's passing. His albums with Fleetwood Mac are my favorites of theirs. *Future Games* and *Kiln House* are excellent—listen to them if you haven't before.

Dean via Jambands.com

OTEILRAD

This October, Dead & Company's Oteil Burbridge will join Joe Russo's Almost Dead for the first part of their seven-show fall tour. Burbridge will play bass with JRAD on Oct. 18-19 in Philadelphia and on Oct. 20 in Washington D.C., while Dave Dreiwitz is on the road with Ween. "Stoked to join Joe Russo's Almost Dead again for a trio of shows in October!" the bassist wrote on Facebook. Burbridge subbed for Dreiwitz a few times last year, including during a multi-night run at New York's Brooklyn Bowl in March and at Morrison, Colo.'s Red Rocks in August. A number of readers shared their thoughts on the impending Dead & Company/JRAD crossover.

OteilRAD at Red Rocks, 8/31/17

This just made my day.

Jennifer Cooke via Facebook

Cool to see Oteil in Philly with JRAD, but I love Dave on bass. He drives that band and makes Joe play harder.

Jason Orloski via Facebook

He wants to play with the band that's doing the Dead the best today.

Doug Cottingham via Facebook

How awesome is that?!?

Keith Shaw via Facebook

Oteil 2020

Michael Rutushin via Facebook

RECORD STORE PROFILE:

RED DEVIL RECORDS, SAN RAFAEL, CALIF.

Red Devil Records just celebrated its 20th year, and with Terrapin Crossroads less than a mile down the road, there's always plenty of musical men and women stopping by to check out the shop's wide selection of vinyl. "If they're from out of state, you can bet they're in town for a show," laughs owner/operator Barry Lazarus. He also counts Widespread Panic's Dave Schools as a regular customer. In fact, Lazarus says, the bassist recently stopped by with The Terrain Family Band's Grahame Lesh and Ross James to shop for reggae records. Red Devil specializes in rare vinyl and boasts an impressive mix of B-side releases and test pressings; a mint, original U.K.-edition of Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* and a never-opened 1967 pressing of the Grateful Dead's debut record are just a few of the classic rock, blues, jazz, reggae and punk rock treasures that line Red Devil's shelves.

FANS.COM PHOTO CONTEST

Jim James performing at Denver's Paramount Theater on Dec. 3, 2016. Photo by Garrett Miller.

Want to be published in *Relix*? Just upload an original photo from a live music event to *Relix*'s Fans.com Photo Contest app. Noted photographer Jay Blakesberg will select the winner from the group of 10 finalists that receives the most votes.

INSTAPRINT

Feeling thirsty? In June, jamgrass torchbearers Greensky Bluegrass (@greenskybluegrass) announced a new collaboration with Telluride Brewing called Greensky: An American Lager. According to the brewery, the beer is a "pure sessionable lager with a delicious Mosaic hop backbone that you can enjoy throughout the show." Read more about this brew and other musically inclined beers in our Relix 44 list.

Peter Wallace (JRAD)

STAND UP TO CANCER™
10 YEARS OF IMPACT

LIVE FRIDAY SEPT 7 8|7C

STANDUPTOCANCER.ORG

American Lung Association's LUNG FORCE, Breast Cancer Research Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society, Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Cancer Stem Cell Consortium, Farrah Fawcett Foundation, Genome Canada, Laura Ziskin Family Trust, LUNGevity Foundation, National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Ovarian Cancer Research Fund Alliance, Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer

STAND UP TO CANCER IS A DIVISION OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY FOUNDATION, A 501(C)(3) CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION. IMAGES ARE FROM STAND UP TO CANCER TELECASTS AND EVENTS.
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH (AACR) IS STAND UP TO CANCER'S SCIENTIFIC PARTNER.

THE BEAT

THE BEST FROM FESTS & TOURS TODAY

The Flambeaux stage: music in-the-round

Pussy Riot dedicate their set to exposing corruption

Phoebe Bridgers joins The National for "Sorrow"

EAUX CLAIRES

EAU CLAIRE, WIS.
JULY 6–7
WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN BLOCH

Since its inaugural year in 2015, Wisconsin's **Eaux Claires** has grown into an annual summer destination, showcasing the highly collaborative musical communities that have grown out of event curators **Justin Vernon** and **Aaron Dessner**'s respective bands and the earthy, Midwestern backdrop that feel so essential to their lauded soundscapes. This year brought some changes: Vernon and Dessner moved weekends to early July and decided not to announce their lineup in advance, aside from some leeks on social media.

However, upon arrival, attendees were greeted with the famous low-key, homegrown, roosty feel that has become the weekend's hallmark. **Hiss Golden Messenger**'s **M.C. Taylor** was an early highlight, winning over fans on the Oxbeaux stage in the woods; **Swamp Dogg**, the fest's lone throwback artist, delivered some straight-up, foot-stomping R&B on Vans' House of IV stage; and **Wye Oak** wore in the in-the-round Flambeaux stage with a wash of dreamy sounds.

Soon after, 22-year-old rising indie-folk star **Julien Baker** and two of Vernon's earliest collaborators—Wisconsin-bred Americana outfit **Field Report** and Megafaun journeyman and Hiss Golden Messenger mainstay **Phil Cook**—greeted festivalgoers. (They also welcomed **Sylvan Esso**'s **Amelia Meath** and **Nick Sanborn** for a downtempo version of their hit "PARAD(w/m)E.") The day came to a close with a genre-bending performance from **Big Red Machine**, a new Vernon and Dessner project that grew out of their collaboration on the *Dark Was the Night* compilation almost a decade ago.

Even though Eaux Claires' second day took place on a Saturday rather than on a Sunday, the **Eaux Claires Women's Choir** opened the festivities and welcomed Baker, **Phoebe Bridgers, Gordi** and other guests during their gospel-heavy set. Then, a number of the modern-rock world's current leading lights showcased a breadth of indie-approved sounds, from **Kevin Morby**'s Leonard Cohen-indebted crackling performance to **Bridgers**' angelic, lush folk set to Chicago's chill hip-hop artist **Noname**'s jazzy delivery and charming engagement. Using Eaux Claires as part of her return from a two year hiatus, **Sharon Van Etten** was perhaps the event's most welcome surprise, presenting a captivating set in the round, while The Russian protest/punk group **Pussy Riot** provided the gathering with its most politically charged moments, offering a profound message of fighting injustice, both stateside and abroad.

Finally, **The National** welcomed some new and old friends to the Flambeaux, and encapsulated the communal essence of the festival, thanks to appearances by Bridgers ("Sorrow"), **Josh Kaufman** and **Mike Lewis** ("So Far So Fast"), **Mouse on Mars** and **Ryan Olsen** ("Walk It Back," Guilty Party," I'll Still Destroy You"), **Chastity Brown** ("Carin at the Liquor Store"), Van Etten ("Light Years"), **Gordi** ("Rylan") and Baker ("Appointments," "Fake Empire"), before bringing the weekend to a close with an acoustic, audience-enabled version of their trademark sing-along finale, "Vanderlyle Crybaby Geeks."

M.A.K.U Soundsystem

In the wake of America's current wave of Trump-led nationalism, Camilo Rodriguez and his Colombian-born collective are taking on xenophobia the only way they know how—by bringing people together.

By **JOHN ADAMIAN**

"I WANT TO MAKE music that is full of fire," guitarist Camilo Rodriguez says of the guiding principle that unites M.A.K.U Soundsystem's multicultural tales of struggle and rebirth. "I want to make music that burns, that is a response to what's happening, with a sense of urgency."

At their core, the New York-based band, most of whom are Colombian-born, play dance music that honors their roots while also taking on issues of immigrant rights, environmentalism and justice for marginalized communities. The project's new EP, *5 Fuegos*, is the first to feature their recently stripped-down lineup, after slimming down from an eight-piece with synth and horns to a more nimble quintet configuration.

M.A.K.U formed in 2010 when Rodriguez recruited a few musicians to help round out a set of songs he was working on by himself. Those initial recordings ended up becoming M.A.K.U Soundsystem's debut LP, and the blueprint for band's distinctive Afrobeat-and-cumbia-flavored sound. Elements of hip-hop, dancehall and Caribbean parade music creep into the mix; the vocals are sometimes sung and sometimes barked, as if through a loudspeaker, to deliver maximum impact. The band also throw in splashes of New York-style global eclecticism, ranging from klezmer clarinet to a frenetic, jazz-metal mash-up of accents and rapid-fire riffs.

Liliana Conde splits vocal duties and plays percussion in M.A.K.U. She's sort of a halftime frontwoman for the group, carefully choosing moments to step into the background and let other band members drive the music. Conde came to the U.S. from Colombia when she was 12. Back home, she had attended a school that placed a strong focus on the arts, so she got an early foundation in music. She grew up in the northern city of Barranquilla, which is on the Caribbean coast and has a vibrant carnival culture.

Carnival cities—like Rio or New Orleans—tend to devote a significant amount of annual energy to the pre-Lenten festivals of excess and music. Their spirit permeates the life of the place year-round, even if it all culminates in one big blowout. In the U.S., Conde found herself missing that energy.

"I became very thirsty for anything having to do with Colombian music—for traditional music—because I was far from my culture," she says.

At the same time, Conde, who was undocumented for part of her time here, was also in the midst of an awakening regarding politics and activism.

"I actually became politicized through music," she says. "Growing up here as an immigrant, as an undocumented young person, it was kind of inevitable to be learning about justice, injustice and my role here."

It was at about that time that Conde learned about the revolutionary music of Nigerian legend Fela Kuti. "I was just blown away because it was the kind of music that I was fascinated by. It was not just danceable, but it was also hypnotic."

That mix of trance-inducing, body-moving polyrhythmic grooves and lyrics that are a call to action can be heard in M.A.K.U Soundsystem's early music. There's also a dose of psychedelic-garage-rock thrown into the mix. Listen to "Pow! Fire," from the band's 2011 record *Makumbala*. It sounds like Sun Ra and Lee Scratch Perry have joined forces and brought along a wild-eyed Caribbean orchestra, boasting some rippling organ sounds and ecstatic horns that give way to layers of percussion. Or check out "Agua," the first track on their 2016 release *Mezcla*, a feverishly syncopated song about the unifying power of water—how it can't be contained by walls or borders, and how our hearts and blood have a similarly wild and vital power.

"I'm on this journey to become more connected to the earth," says Conde.

The band may have stripped away some of those dense layers of sound—Conde switched from playing a traditional Colombian drum to an electronic drum pad, which broadens some of the sonic possibilities—but they've retained their fascination with the elements. The new EP's title translates to "five fires." And M.A.K.U isn't just interested in scorching flames for their light or heat or purifying powers. The EP is a quasi-concept album based in part on the idea of pyrophilic plants, some which have seeds that remain dormant until they've passed through the intense heat of a fire.

The 2016 U.S. presidential election created what she calls "a ridiculous political situation" that only served to make the grain of xenophobia in America more explicit. And music helps combat that.

"It can be really difficult to feel like we have the power to actually change something but, for me, the role that I see with music is in continuing to bring people together," says Conde. "It's almost like a call to action—instead of feeling too helpless and becoming pessimistic with all the things are happening in the world—the time is now, more than ever, to feed that energy into creation."

jambands.com Need We Say More? FOR UP-TO-THE-MINUTE REVIEWS AND NEWS, PLEASE GO TO WWW.JAMBANDS.COM

Soundcheck

LIVE REVIEWS AND NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE *Compiled by* DEAN BUDNICK

The Edge commands the catwalk

U2

MOHEGAN SUN ARENA
UNCASVILLE, CONN.
JULY 3

Toward the close of **U2**'s performance at Mohegan Sun Arena on July 3, **Bono** noted that this was the final U.S. date of the band's Experience + Innocence Tour and expressed his admiration for the audience's energy on a Tuesday night, mouthing "Wow!"

The reverence was mutual as the rapt crowd absorbed the auditory and ocular spectacle centering around the biographical narrative that informs the group's latest record, *Songs of Experience*. In many respects, this evening marked the conclusion of an odyssey that began with the band's Innocence + Experience run in 2015, before U2 shifted gears for 2017's *Joshua Tree* tour interlude. Just as *Songs of Experience* was a companion piece to the group's prior record, *Songs of Innocence*, there was also a commonality in the stage design.

A two-tiered hydraulic catwalk bisected the venue, connecting the traditional stage to a smaller circular spot at the far end of the arena. The band made ample use of the walkway, both performing on it and traveling across it to the secondary platform. All told, the group produced as much music beyond the confines of the formal stage as on it, which lent an intimacy to the proceedings that matched the thematic subject matter. The band members often fanned out across the venue, which helped call attention to their individual contributions while serving the larger mission, as on "Sunday Bloody Sunday" when **Larry Mullen Jr.** marched across the building playing only a snare drum. This arrangement also underscored **Adam Clayton**'s pulsing bass along with **The Edge**'s ringing guitar leads and essential, oft-overlooked harmony vocals.

What's more, the catwalk was covered with a diaphanous LED curtain, which presented live footage of the band as well as images and animations to complement the songs. (This feature was put to particularly good effect during "Cedarwood Road" in which Bono seemingly walked along an illustrated version of the street where he grew up.)

There may be no other arena-level band touring today with such a refined sense of dynamics. U2 thrives at blending hush and bombast, a skill set particularly well-suited to the new material. The quartet focused on this collection, which reflects the grand impact of quiet decisions, while embracing the dichotomy of experience and innocence.

Perhaps it was inevitable that politics would surface on Independence Day eve in the Constitution State. Bono made a point of acknowledging former Connecticut Senator Chris Dodd, who took an active role in facilitating the Irish peace process while serving on the Foreign Relations Committee. The singer also had choice words regarding the current administration's policy on immigration, which he delivered in the guise of the satanic "Mr. MacPhisto," resuscitating the character from the Zoo TV tour while citing lyrics from "Sympathy for the Devil." At the night's close, he also referenced U2's advocacy organization, encouraging audience members to visit one.org to participate in their "poverty is sexist" campaign.

Bono recognizes that the personal is political and strives to make politics personal. So too, he effectively melds the intimate and grandiose, as on the night's final song "13 (There Is a Light)," in which he exited through the crowd, embodying his assertion that "there's no them, there's only us."

Dean Budnick

Dean Budnick

RADIOHEAD

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
NEW YORK
JULY 10

The morning before **Radiohead** kicked off their four-show run at New York's Madison Square Garden in July, the venue posted a picture of the tour banner hanging outside the entrance on social media, captioning it: "Everything in its right place," referring to the song of the same name from the English rock icons. That night, the band made good on that statement by delivering a nearly flawless, 25-song, two-encore performance, affirming that The Garden is exactly the right place to experience a Radiohead show.

The evening began with a fascinating, if not a bit jarring, opening set from **Junjun**, guitarist **Jonny Greenwood**'s Middle Eastern-influenced side project with Israeli-American singer and composer **Shye Ben Tzur**. Greenwood then returned along with his brother **Colin**, and longtime bandmates **Thom Yorke**, **Ed O'Brien** and **Philip Selway**—plus touring percussionist and Portishead member **Clive Deamer**—and eased the crowd into their set, opening with the beautifully lilting "Daydreamer," off 2016's *A Moon Shaped Pool*, and allowing their stage lighting to create one of the many breathtaking moments of the night when beams of white light exploded in every direction from a central axis on the stage.

Two songs later, Yorke busted out some of his signature dance moves, losing himself in the frenetic climax of "Myxomatosis." Then, Yorke quickly changed course, moving to piano for the first time of the night for the often overlooked *Kid A* track "Morning Bell," before pairing that cut with two other tunes from the seminal record, "Optimistic" and the LP's title track.

Radiohead have not released a full album of new music in over two years, freeing them to explore their catalog during their shows this year, mixing fan and band favorites with some lesser-played selections and deep cuts. Yet, somehow, Radiohead know how to make all their songs' disparate personalities—the group seems to reveal a new facet of itself with each innovative album—feel like they could have come from the same record when placed together in their live sets. There is a seamless aspect to this band's performance that feels regimented but still never over-rehearsed, giving the whole show the quality of a well-paced symphony with two dozen movements.

After putting newer tune "Decks Dark" up against the classic "Pyramid Song," Radiohead reminded everyone that they can do pretty much anything they want—including churning out solid pop songs—with the harmony-laden "Let Down." For the next tune, Jonny Greenwood added to the already percussive stage setup with his own snare-and-tom drum kit, lending *King of Limbs* track "Bloom" its signature beat.

Soon after, the meditative cuts "The Numbers" and "How to Disappear Completely" led into a crowd favorite, with the tambourine-assisted intro to "Reckoner" eliciting shouts and applause from the packed Garden audience. Two songs later, though, Radiohead upped the ante by diving headfirst into the frantic *OK Computer* banger "Paranoid Android," whose heavy bass-and-guitar main riff marked an audiovisual highlight of the night, with the oblong screen behind the band bursting with a red, pulsating wormhole image that sent the show into the stratosphere.

Two more band staples, the understated-yet-gorgeous cuts "Idioteque" and "Nude," closed out the main set, but Yorke and company were hardly finished with the crowd, returning for two separate encores that spanned eight more tunes, including "No Surprises" and "The Bends," which served as the final offerings of the night.

Decades removed from their early Britpop days, a Radiohead show is an engulfing experience. The genius of the individual band members is nearly shrouded by how easy they make it look onstage. Throughout the night, each instrumentalist serves several purposes—melody, harmony, percussion—as needed, and the whole operation goes off without a hitch, giving an air of effortlessness to something that actually only comes from hard and meticulous work. Although it is—and has long been—the norm for Radiohead, on opening night at The Garden, everything was indeed in its right place.

Matt Inman

Thom Yorke: feeling frenetic at the Garden

Taylor Hill

FISHBONE

LEVITT PAVILION
LOS ANGELES
JUNE 29

Under the moonlit palms and pines of Macarthur Park, the classic lineup of **Fishbone** reunited for a free hometown show on the Levitt Pavilion stage. A wildly eclectic band borrowing from ska, punk, funk, rock and soul, the sextet is an irrefutable survivor, first forming in Los Angeles nearly 40 years ago. And it was their zenith, a decade-plus chunk between 1985's self-titled debut EP and 1996's *Chim Chim's Badass Revenge*, from which the group drew the near-entirety of the setlist on this Friday night party in the park.

Open to all, the 100-minute performance congregated a cross section of the city. For the unaware roller-skating or cycling through to the excited toddlers, weary homeless and, of course, hundreds of Fishbone faithful, the gathering became as much a political rally as it was a concert. With indefatigable energy, singer and saxophonist **Angelo Moore** handed out "F--K Racism" placards as he posed for pictures for an hour, pre-show, then marched through the masses waving high a banner carrying the same explicit sentiment moments ahead of show time. There were dedications of the speed-metal "Subliminal Fascism" to the announced retirement of Supreme Court Justice Kennedy, and "Lyin Ass Bitch," for President Trump, and his government.

A Fishbone show has always offered a multitude of aural and visual messages. The acid-jazz guitar of onetime Miles Davis sideman John Bigham shaded the opening "Unyielding Conditioning." Bigham's heavy-fuzz distortion on "Behavior Control Technician" was another example of the all-inclusive, everything-goes attitude also evidenced by the maroon Fez that sat atop Moore's head and drummer Philip "Fish" Fisher's patented playing position, with his back to the clamoring crowd.

Angelo Moore and Walter Kibby share "Ghetto Soundwaves"

Meanwhile, horns blasted through "Ghetto Soundwaves," streetwise humor inspired "Ugly" and "Cholly" and social issues informed "Alcoholic," "Slow Bus Movin' (Howard Beach Party)" and "Pray to the Junkiemaker."

The most pleasing takeaway from it all was that Fishbone remains angry, motivated inspired and fun, dutifully keeping the volume and tempos lifted up where they belong. **John Norwood Fisher** remains a preeminent bassist, and with Fish, he is part of a truly locked in sibling rhythm section. **Walter Kibby**'s trumpet and vocals shadow Moore's frontline magnetism with imposing supporting strength as **Christopher Dowd**'s versatility on vocals, keyboards and trombone fits hand-in-glove between the pair.

Fishbone moved into vintage early-'90s angst with the hyper-fast "Pressure" while the penultimate "Bonin' in the Boneyard" was a slice of pure '80s adolescence. The set-closing "Sunless Saturday" bulldozed marvelously into the "Everyday Sunshine" encore and stretched into an audience sing-along before the dual encore of "Skankin' to the Beat" and anthem "Party at Ground Zero" doubled back to the band's beginnings, leaving no doubt that Fishbone's music is as vital now as ever.

Larson Sutton

THE WAR ON DRUGS

AGORA THEATRE
CLEVELAND
JULY 13

While some people contend that rock is dead, on this night in Cleveland, **The War on Drugs** demonstrated that, when in the right hands and with the right material, the genre remains vital and exciting.

Playing to a packed Agora Theatre, the sextet powered through a two-hour set that displayed the full scope of their sound, which evoked a cross-country road trip of fluctuating speed limits and rural and urban landscapes. The 15 songs appealed to a crowd that ranged from collegians to AARP cardholders and touched on all four Drugs' albums, including opening number "Brothers" from 2011's *Slave Ambient* and "Arms Like Boulders" from *Wagonwheel Blues*, the group's 2008 full-length debut.

The War on Drugs nod to Bruce Springsteen through their music's widescreen atmospherics and Bob Dylan in band visionary **Adam Granduciel**'s lyrical cadence and vocal delivery. With his vision and the rest of the musicians' support, Granduciel honored and continued their legacies.

Arriving in Cleveland after nearly a year's worth of shows supporting the Grammy-winning album *A Deeper Understanding*, the members effortlessly moved from the high-speed pulsating rhythms of "Holding On" and "An Ocean in Between the Waves" to more restrained yet equally hypnotic fare—"Pain," "Strangest Thing" and "Knocked Down."

The band received four well-deserved standing ovations following the extended sax break by **Jon Natchez** on "Eyes to the Wind," the runaway train pace of "Red Eyes," a seven-plus minute rendering of "Under the Pressure" that went through a full range of musical emotions—soothing, trance-like, cathartic and euphoric—and a cover of Neil Young's "Like a Hurricane," which was added at the last-minute as the final encore.

The evening was also a homecoming for Drugs guitarist/keyboardist **Anthony Lamarca**, who grew up nearby in Youngstown, Ohio. Just like he did for a portion of the tour, he performed twice, opening the evening with his band, The Building, offering a short set of contemplative, subdued rock, and then joining the headliner.

John Patrick Gatta

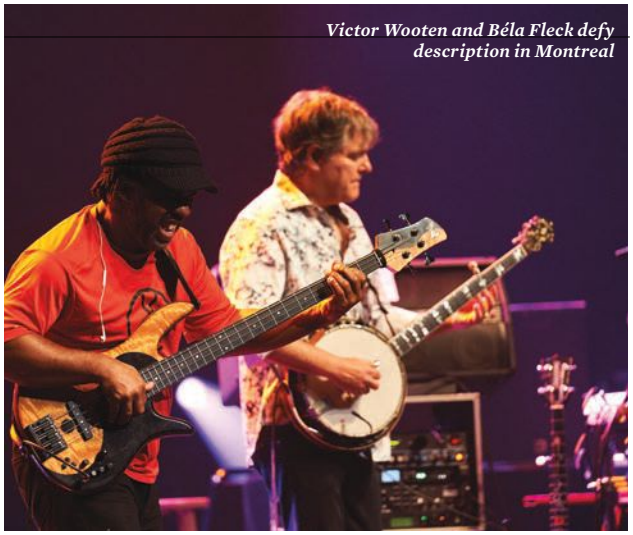
The War on Drugs evoke "a cross-country road trip of fluctuating speed limits and rural and urban landscapes"

Farah Sosa (Fishbone) John Patrick Gatta (The War on Drugs)

BÉLA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES

PLACE DES ARTS
MONTREAL
JULY 1

The Montreal Jazz Festival isn't what one would normally refer to as a staid affair. Yet the oppressive heat that smouldered



Victor Wooten and Béla Fleck defy description in Montreal

throughout the festival left many of the attendees feeling listless and anything but energized.

Consequently, the air-conditioned environs of the sprawling Place des Arts not only offered a much needed retreat from the heat, but also provided an opportunity to get revved up and rejuvenated by a band that's always adept at elevating their audiences. **Béla Fleck & The Flecktones** rose to the occasion, demonstrating why fusion remains an inadequate term for a sound that simply defies description, not only when it comes to melody, but also its conception and dynamic as well.

Given that Fleck has long brought the banjo into uncharted territory, it is no surprise that, on this night, the rapid-fire runs found in more traditional bluegrass confines quickly give way to subtlety and nuance. It's an expressive additive that Fleck integrates into this ensemble, rather than taking over the lead.

Indeed, each member of the quartet maintains a distinct individual identity. Bassist **Victor Wooten** contributes deep melodic flourishes that not only serve the persistent pulse, but also frequently take lead and solo duties as well. His brother—who still performs under the moniker of **Future Man** while dressed in his customary swashbuckler regalia—plays an invention of his own making, the drumitar, an unlikely apparatus that serves as the band's prime percussion tool. He demonstrates added dexterity by occasionally playing a standard drum kit with one hand while tapping the drumitar with the other. **Howard Levy**, a founding member of the group who returned to the fold in 2011 after nearly two decades of absence, establishes the songs on keyboards and harmonica sometimes simultaneously—giving the music a core focus, even as he takes it into other realms as well.

While some refer to The Flecktones as a bluegrass jamband, in truth, that's a misnomer. Jazz, funk and classical music all converge—an innovative mix in every sense. It's complex, of course, so much so that when Fleck talked out the tempo changes for a new tune called "Vertigo," the band dutifully took the instructions in stride. Yet even at its most dynamic, the music is uncommonly melodic, never too fastidious or otherwise inaccessible. "Hurricane Camille" found Wooten and Future Man getting in a groove, while "Flight of the Cosmic Hippo," one of the band's best known songs, shares both whimsy and wonder. The band enticed the audience to snap their fingers in time for the latter, making it the only opportunity for the crowd to keep up. Indeed, when it comes to innovation and invention, the Flecktones remain unequalled as far as flash and finesse.

Lee Zimmerman

Benoit Rousseau, Montreal Jazz Festival

Thank you, PhanArt Pete for your generous donations since 2004 of over $42,500 to the all-volunteer Phish fan charity, The Mockingbird Foundation to support music education for kids!

THE mockingbird FOUNDATION

Phish fans helping kids make music since 1996

www.phish.net • www.mbird.org

The 18th Annual Relix Festival Guide Encore

Edited by **MATT INMAN**

The traditional festival season may come to a close with the first hints of fall, but there are still a number of great offerings on the horizon in the near future. In the encore of our 2018 Festival Guide, we present a mix of the late-summer gatherings, autumnal celebrations like Austin City Limits and Suwannee Hulaween and even the winter fests and destination events stretching into early 2019.

All lineups are up-to-date as of press time. Be sure to keep up with all festival announcements at relix.com/festivals, and if you see an **(R)** next to a listing below, then visit us onsite at the *Relix* booth!

Austin City Limits

June Lake Jam
9/8-9 // June Lake, CA
Melvin Seals & JGB, Cubensis, Moonalice, Matthew Curry, GrooveSession, Achilles Wheel, Rose's Pawn Shop, more
monoarts.org/june-lake-jam-fest

AMERICANAFEST® Music Festival
9/11-16 // Nashville, TN
John Prine and Friends, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Lee Ann Woman & Friends, The Milk Carton Kids, Tommy Emmanuel, Jerry Douglas, more
americanamusic.org/about-americanafest

Half Moon Gathering
9/14-16 // Rogersville, MO
Brian Henke, Opal Fly & Kapow, Tracer Heights, Bongo Jack vs. The Loop Machine, Jason Kinney Band, Drifters Mule, more
halfmoongathering.com

iHeartRadio
9/21-22 // Las Vegas, NV
Justin Timberlake, Jack White, Carrie Underwood, Fleetwood Mac, Mariah Carey, Imagine Dragons, Jason Aldean, Sam Smith, Lynyrd Skynyrd, more iheart.com/music-festival

Bristol Rhythm & Roots Reunion
9/21-23 // Bristol, VA
Old Crow Medicine Show, Railroad Earth, Taj Mahal Trio, The SteelDrivers, Marcus King Band, Twin Peaks, Barns Country, more
birthplaceofcountrymusic.org/festival

Life Is Beautiful
9/21-23 // Las Vegas, NV
The Weeknd, Arcade Fire, Florence + The Machine, Travis Scott, ODESZA, N.E.R.D, Death Cab for Cutie, St. Vincent, more lifeisbeautiful.com

Monterey Jazz
9/21-23 // Monterey, CA
Norah Jones, Wynton Marsalis, Dianne Reeves, Jon Batiste & The Dap-Kings, Charles Lloyd, Lucinda Williams, Bill Frisell Trio, Julian Lage Trio, more
montereyjazzfestival.org

Bourbon & Beyond
9/22-23 // Louisville, KY
John Mayer, Sting, Robert Plant, Lenny Kravitz, David Byrne, Counting Crows, Gov't Mule, Sheryl Crow, Kaleo, Blackberry Smoke, more
bourbonandbeyond.com

Pilgrimage
9/22-23 // Franklin, TN
Jack White, Chris Stapleton, Lionel Richie, Dave Matthews & Tim Reynolds, Hozier, Brandi Carlile, Counting Crows, Amos Lee, Dawes, more pilgrimagefestival.com

Sonoma Harvest
9/22-23 // Glen Ellen, CA
The Avett Brothers, The Head and the Heart, Lake Street Dive, Shovels & Rope, Rodrigo Y Gabriela, ZZ Ward, more
sonomaharvestmusicfestival.com

POP Montreal
9/26-30 // Montreal, Quebec
SOPHIE, Wanda Jackson, Bill Callahan, Venetian Snares x Daniel Lanois, Wolf Parade, Kilo Kish, Homeshake, U.S. Girls, more
popmontreal.com

Wide Open Bluegrass
9/28-29 // Raleigh, NC
Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder with Patty Loveless, Earls of Leicester, Alison Brown + Becky Buller + Sierra Hull + Missy Raines + Molly Tuttle, more
wideopenbluegrass.com

Devils Backbone Hoopla
9/28-30 // Nelson County, VA
Tyler Childers, Rayland Baxter, Andy Frasco and The U.N., Larry Keel Explosion, Ghost of Paul Revere, Horseshoes & Hand Grenades, more
dbbrewingcompany.com

Meeting of the Minds
9/28-30 // Schuylkill Haven, PA
Josh Roberts and The Hinges, Frogleg, Mungion, Cousin Earth, The Stupid Robots, The Jazz Hands, Coffins and Cobwebs, more
jibberjazz.com

Ohana
9/28-30 // Dana Point, CA
Mumford & Sons, Eddie Vedder, Eric Church, Beck, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Norah Jones, Amos Lee, Liz Phair, Johnny Marr, more
theohanafest.com

Roots N Blues N BBQ
9/28-30 // Columbia, MO
The Avett Brothers, Sturgill Simpson, Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats, Greensky Bluegrass, Lake Street Dive, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, more
rootsnbluesnbbq.com

Music Tastes Good
9/29-30 // Long Beach, CA
New Order, James Blake, Joey Bada$$, Broken Social Scene, The Black Angels, Santigold, Lizzo, Parquet Courts, more mtglb.co

(R) See. Hear. Now
9/29-30 // Asbury Park, NJ
Jack Johnson, Incubus, Ben Harper & The Innocent Criminals, Social Distortion, Brandi Carlile, Milky Chance, Blondie, more
seahearnowfestival.com
Festival Facts: Though See. Hear. Now is a first year event, the festival already has deep roots: noted photographer and festival guru

Sounds of the Summer

Lake Street Dive

A curious character has appeared in each of Lake Street Dive's last three albums. He was introduced during 2014's *Bad Self Portraits* in a song named for him, "Bobby Tanqueray," reemerged on 2016's *Side Pony* via the bouncy put-down tune "Spectacular Failure" and returns yet again in the band's newest effort, *Free Yourself Up*, which dropped in early May.

This isn't a typical "Parts I–III" song cycle, though. Instead, each track gives a starkly different view on the speaker's relationship with the character—starting with admiration from afar on *Portraits*, flipping 180-degrees to denouncement and almost pity on *Pony*, and finally taking on a more nuanced, reflective stance thanks to the failed relationship showcased during *Free Yourself Up*'s "Doesn't Even Matter Now."

"It's cool to examine a relationship and turn the globe to see it from all these different angles," says lead vocalist Rachael Price, who explains that drummer Mike Calabrese originally conceived the character of Bobby Tanqueray, but other members of the band have expounded on him since. She points to Lake Street Dive's highly collaborative songwriting ethos. "When you have a relationship with somebody, you end up feeling every single way about it, depending on how much time it's been and the state of your mind at the time. So it's really a fun project."

The same could be said about *Free Yourself Up*, which, like the band's latest take on Mr. Tanqueray, offers a more mature mind-set on a continuing theme. For the album, Lake Street Dive made the decision to take on production duties themselves in an effort to gain confidence in the studio and further themselves as professional musicians.

"It was a big process coming to that decision," says Price, noting that the band technically considers the LP to be a co-production, due to their work with Mason Jar Music's Dan Knobler. "We had a whole philosophical discussion about what a producer does and about who we are as a recording band versus who we are as a live band. We felt like we really needed to raise our abilities as a recording band to be at the same quality as what we do as a live band. This feels like the beginning of a new way of how Lake Street Dive records."

Though they hadn't sat the helm for a Lake Street Dive album before, the members of the band weren't altogether new to the position. Bassist Bridget Kearney co-produced her 2017 solo effort *Won't Let You Down*, and Calabrese and guitarist Mike "McDuck" Olson used to share a basement recording studio. But bringing that experience to a Lake Street Dive studio session was a different challenge.

"The thing that we were the most scared of is that we wouldn't have that neutral voice to step into and get us to move on with a decision," Price says. "Because we're such a fiercely democratic band, we were worried that everyone would have their suggestions and then we wouldn't know where to go from there."

The reality was less intimidating and *Free Yourself Up*, as the name suggests, coalesced into the group's most collaborative collection of songs to date, with most of the tracks attributed to multiple members. Price cites closing number "Hang On" as an example, saying, "That song just simply wouldn't have existed if it was one band member. For me, knowing these songwriters so well, it's so clearly a McDuck idea and a Bridget idea. And somehow they went perfectly together."

Free Yourself Up may have been born of a new process, but it certainly still retains the Lake Street Dive spirit that has begun to solidify on their last couple of albums. There's somber introspection throughout tracks like "I Can Change" and "Musta Been Something," slotted right next to assertive, playful numbers like "Dude" (featuring the wonderful lyric, "We used to kick it like Joe and Obama/ Now you just leave me at home playin' mama") and "Red Light Kisses," which opens with a tasty funk riff from the newest member of the band, keyboardist Akie Bermiss.

"Akie was hugely helpful and inspiring," says Price (also noting that his name is pronounced "Like hockey without the H"). Bermiss joined the group last year to flesh out their live sound on tour and everything clicked, leading to a more featured keyboard presence on *Free Yourself Up* than with previous records. "It went so perfectly that, after that tour, we basically didn't want to ever not have a keyboard player. And we knew that we needed him in the studio," Price says.

That openness to new experiences in their band relationship—even after 13 years together—is part of why Lake Street Dive are still having a blast onstage and in the studio, and they're not planning on going anywhere soon.

"We've always been very cognizant of longevity," explains Price. "We're trying to make this last a long time. This pressure to be in the moment—to make a song that speaks to what people currently want to hear—is something we try to stay away from. We don't know why our music spoke to people or particularly hit when it did, but we're just trying to stay consistent within ourselves, while also exploring what we want to do creatively. [On the new album], we realized that we were freeing ourselves up during the whole recording process from any sort of outside voices and just looking to ourselves. We've always had fun, but this was on another level." ***Matt Inman***

You can catch Lake Street Dive at Whale Rock, Sonoma Harvest, Roots N Blues N BBQ and elsewhere.

eric lindell

REVOLUTION IN YOUR HEART

"A TREMENDOUS RAW TALENT WITH A POET'S SOUL...LINDELL WRITES FROM THE HEART WITH A FULLY REALIZED MUSICAL VISION"
—CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

"IMPRESSIVE SUPER SLINKY BLUES AND ROCK WITH A TASTE OF COUNTRY TWANG. BOUND TO WIN OVER ROOTS MUSIC FANS FOR YEARS TO COME" *—GUITAR PLAYER*

alligatorrecords.com
GENUINE HOUSEROCKIN' MUSIC SINCE 1971

Sounds of the Summer

Unknown Mortal Orchestra

"Right now, it seems like our Canadian fans are probably more out of control than our American fans," says Ruban Nielson, frontman and primary driving force behind Unknown Mortal Orchestra. "It's weird—you go over a border and, all of a sudden, it's suddenly wilder."

Nielson is calling from Paris on his band's spring European tour, heading to soundcheck before playing a club show in the French capital. Like their previous dates in Germany, tonight's venue is a bit more intimate than those that UMO were playing during the North American stretch of the outing, but Nielson and company have embraced the change.

"It's been quite cool because the shows have been kind of quiet," Nielson says. "We only started to get popular here after *Multi-Love*, so it's sort of like going back in time. We play smaller clubs, and it's good for us—there's nothing like winning over fans at an early stage."

Earlier this year, Nielson and Unknown Mortal Orchestra released their fourth studio album, *Sex & Food*, a kaleidoscopic romp through heavily layered sounds that range from metal-esque riffs to light, lilting falsetto vocals. As Nielson mentions, the group's previous effort—2015's *Multi-Love*—served as something of a launchpad for their worldwide success. The record's support tour stretched through the better part of three years—what Nielson refers to as "an endless cycle."

"We didn't know that album was going to be as popular as it ended up being," Nielson admits, noting that the ensuing run began in smaller venues but grew as more booking agents began contacting them, including some overseas.

That lengthy stint of world traveling may have had something to do with the creative process that ended up forming—and influencing—*Sex & Food*. Nielson, a native New Zealander who has called Portland, Ore., home for around a decade, decided to record on the road in a big way, traveling to places like Vietnam, Iceland and Mexico to piece together what would become the dozen tracks on the LP.

Nielson conceived both *Multi-Love* and UMO's previous album *II* in his home studio in Portland, but he wasn't in a hurry to return to that same process. "I just felt like I would drive myself crazy if I did that again, hanging out in a basement by myself for another album—which was going to take about a year and a half," Nielson says, "because I recorded at night and would sleep during the day. I just felt like I should try to figure out a way to keep myself from going nuts. I would work for a while and then, when I started to get stir-crazy, I would just book a flight and meet some of my bandmates out in a strange place."

Instead of paying for expensive studio time in New York or LA and shirking the cost of a producer by helming the process himself, Nielson found justification for jet-setting off to Reykjavik, Mexico City and Hanoi—where he and his bandmates found inspiration in their surroundings while living in an apartment and recording at a studio meant for traditional Vietnamese music.

"We didn't do anything apart from go from the apartment to the studio, so it wasn't like a tourist experience at all, but it was really interesting to be living there, walking from the apartment to the studio every day and going though lotus fields—very vivid images," Nielson remembers. "It was almost what I expected Vietnam to be like, which was a surprise. It was compatible with the Vietnam in my imagination. That was really inspiring. It was monsoon season, so it was quite hard to record there, but we always seemed to have something to play."

The band's trip also included an encounter with a musician named Minh, with whom Neilson and company recorded a full album's worth of instrumental music—"something in between electric jazz and hard rock, plus all the stuff that Minh was contributing with these traditional Vietnamese instruments"—which he expects will be released at a later date.

Nielson is most assuredly a well-traveled individual, though a good portion of his current rumination centers around his adopted home country, as displayed in the lead single off *Sex & Food*, "American Guilt," whose hard-rock-heavy opening riff was in his mind for some time, but never fit with previous projects.

"I had a bunch of lyrics, as well, that always seemed a little harsh," he explains. "And I had this phrase, 'American guilt,' that I think was about a feeling that grows as I live in America longer, understand the culture more and feel more American. It wasn't that I was pointing the finger at other people—I hate the idea of writing songs about what's wrong with somebody else. It was more about this growing feeling of alarm in the world. And I didn't want it to be a partisan thing; I wanted to speak to the general feeling of paranoia that is growing in the States, but also other places as well."

Nielson also sees a sort of exuberant fatalism in the United States. "It's always the end of the world or something," he says. "But it's quite exciting—it always feels like something's happening. In New Zealand, things don't really change that much—they don't really swing as violently to the left and the right. People aren't as paranoid and the divisions aren't as in-your-face. But that's just something that I've observed. I don't have an opinion on it either way—it's just interesting." ***Matt Inman***

You can catch Unknown Mortal Orchestra at Brisbane, Festival Hipnosis, Pitchfork Music Festival Paris and elsewhere.

Danny Clinch is one of this beach-town event's guiding lights.

(R) There's No Leaving New York
9/29-30 // Queens, NY
The National, Jason Isbell and The 400 Unit, Future Islands, Cat Power, Cigarettes After Sex, Phoebe Bridgers, Bully, more
americanmary.com
Festival Facts: In April, The National nodded to their Cincinnati roots with their inaugural Homecoming festival. This September, the group will honor the city where they coalesced with another new two-day gathering at Forest Hills Stadium. The event arrives a year after The National's guest-heavy debut at the recently resurrected venue.

Philly Bluegrass Revival
9/30 // Philadelphia, PA
The Infamous Stringdusters, Del & Dawg (Del McCoury & David Grisman), Jeff Austin Band, Larry Keel Experience, Cris Jacobs Band, more
manncenter.org

King Biscuit Blues
10/3-6 // Helena, AR
Blackberry Smoke, Dave Mason and Steve Cropper, Bobby Rush, Jack Pearson, Carolyn Wonderland, more
kingbiscuitfestival.com

(R) The Big Weekend
10/4-6 // Chicago, IL
Umphrey's McGee, Lettuce, Emancipator Ensemble, Amy Helm, Leftover Salmon, The Motet, Papadosio, The Revolution, The Russ Liquid Test, Spafford, more
thebigweekend.net

Joshua Tree
10/4-7 // Joshua Tree, CA
Matador! Soul Sounds, Monophonics, Fatoumata Diawara,

Jupiter & Okwess, House of Hamsa, Evanoff, Speed Caravan, more
joshuatreemusicfestival.com

The Marcus Kind Band Family Reunion
10/5-6 // Black Mountain, NC
The Marcus Kind Band, The Revivalists, Billy Strings, Devon Allman Project featuring Duane Betts, Nikki Lane, Carl Broemel, Naughty Professor, Geoff Achison, more
mkbfamilyreunion.com

The Festy Experience
10/5-7 // Arrington, VA
Greensky Bluegrass, Gillian Welch, Railroad Earth, Sam Bush Band, Della Mae, Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder, Fruition, Rubblebucket, more
thefesty.com

Hardly Strictly Bluegrass
10/5-7 // San Francisco, CA
Jeff Tweedy, Emmylou Harris, Ani DiFranco, Howlin Rain, Gregory Alan Isakov, Gomez, The Greyboy Allstars, I'm With Her, more
hardlystrictlybluegrass.com

Austin City Limits
10/5-7, 10/12-14 // Austin, TX
Paul McCartney, Metallica, Childish Gambino, Arctic Monkeys, Travis Scott, ODESZA, The National, David Byrne, St. Vincent, more
aclfestival.com

Rock Allegiance
10/6 // Camden, NJ
Avenged Sevenfold, Limp Bizkit, Papa Roach, Skillet, Bullet for My Valentine, Beartooth, Insane Clown Posse, GWAR, more
rockallegiance.com

A3C
10/6-7 // Atlanta, GA
Wu-Tang Clan, Lil Wayne, The Diplomats, J.I.D., Curren$y, Young Ma, Prhyme, Mannie Fresh, Westside Gunn & Conway, more
a3cfestival.com

Mempho
10/6-7 // Memphis, TN
Beck, Post Malone, Phoenix, Nas, Janelle Monáe, Mac DeMarco, Milky Chance, George Clinton & Parliament Funkadelic, Rich the Kid, more
memphofest.com

Hillberry Harvest Moon
10/11-14 // Eureka Springs, AR
Railroad Earth, Trampled By Turtles, Sam Bush, Lettuce, The Wood Brothers, The Infamous Stringdusters, Billy Strings, more
hillberryfestival.com

Treasure Island
10/13-14 // Oakland, CA
Tame Impala, A$AP Rocky, Silk City (Diplo + Mark Ronson), Lord Huron, Courtney Barnett, Santigold, Pusha T, Sharon Van Etten, more
treasureislandfestival.com

Suwannee Roots Revival
10/11-14 // Live Oak, FL
Oteil & Friends, Leftover Salmon, Donna the Buffalo, Keller Williams' PettyGrass feat. The Hillbenders, Peter Rowan Free Mexican Airforce, more
suwanneerootsrevival.com

Halifax Pop Explosion
10/17-20 // Halifax, Nova Scotia
Zola Jesus, Born Ruffians, CupcakKe, Cadence Weapon, Port Cities, Sean Leon, Reuben and the Dark, Helena Deland, Fat Tony, Applecat, more
halifaxpopexplosion.com

Florida Jam
10/20 // Boca Raton, FL
Dickey Betts Band, The Elvin Bishop Band, Eric Gales
musicjamproductions.com/florida-jam-2018

Hangtown
10/25-28 // Placerville, CA
Railroad Earth, The Claypool Lennon Delirium, Trampled by Turtles, Karl Denson's Tiny Universe presents Eat A Bunch of Peaches, Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real, The Infamous Stringdusters, more
hangtownfestival.com

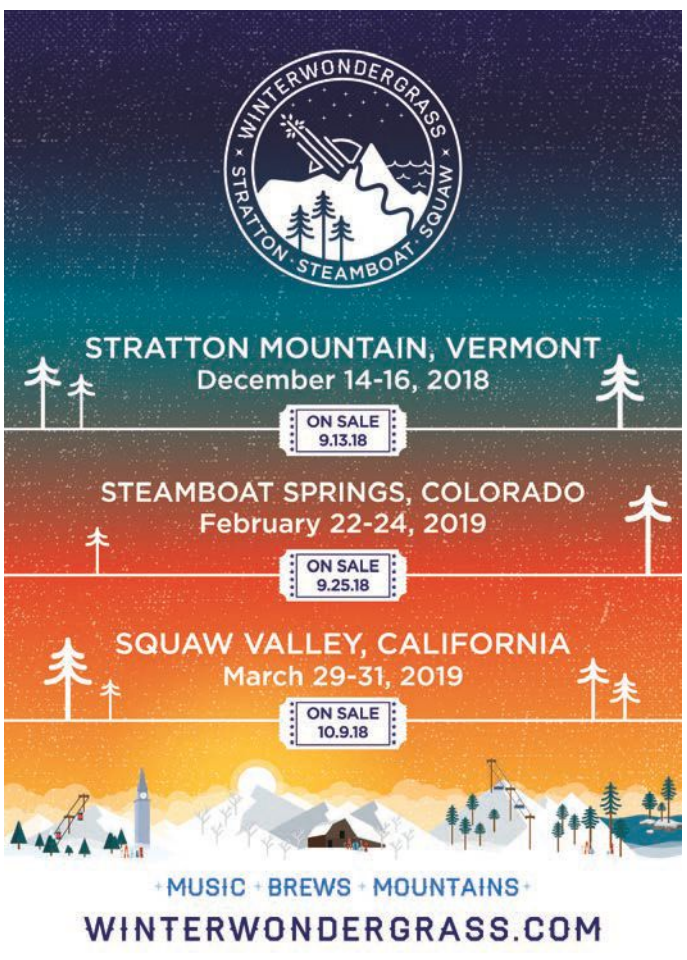
Suwannee Hulaween
10/26-28 // Live Oak, FL
The String Cheese Incident, Odesza, Jamiroquai, Janelle Monáe, Tipper, The Revivalists, Vulfpeck, Lettuce, Trampled by Turtles, more
suwanneehulaween.com

Voodoo
10/26-28 // New Orleans, LA
Mumford & Sons, Childish Gambino, Arctic Monkeys, Odesza, Martin Garrix, A Perfect Circle, Modest Mouse, more
voodoofestival.com

Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise
10/28-11/4 // San Diego, CA
Taj Mahal & The Phantom Blues Band, Booker T. Jones' Stax Revue, Los Lobos, Tab Benoit's Whiskey Bayou, G. Love & Special Sauce, more
bluescruise.com

Pitchfork Paris
11/1-3 // Paris, France
Bon Iver, Fever Ray, Mac

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
BOURBON & Beyond
A perfect blend of bourbon, food & music.
SEPT. 22 & 23, 2018
CHAMPIONS PARK, LOUISVILLE, KY
TICKETS ON SALE NOW
Saturday JOHN MAYER • LENNY KRAVITZ
DAVID BYRNE • SHERYL CROW • BRIAN SETZER'S ROCKABILLY RIOT! • KEB' MO'
JJ GREY & MOFRO • JOSEPH • MINDI ABAIR AND THE BONESHAKERS • LARKIN POE
SWIMMING WITH BEARS
Sunday STING • ROBERT PLANT AND THE SENSATIONAL SPACE SHIFTERS
COUNTING CROWS • GOV'T MULE • KALEO • BLACKBERRY SMOKE
THE RECORD COMPANY • DON FELDER • BENJAMIN BOOKER • DEL MCCOURY BAND
THE MAGPIE SALUTE • THE LAST BANDOLEROS
PERFORMING ON THE BLUEGRASS SITUATION STAGE
THE TRAVELIN' MCCOURYS • BEN SOLLEE • BILLY STRINGS • RIVER WHYLESS • LINDSAY LOU
MICHAEL CLEVELAND & FLAMEKEEPER • MADISEN WARD AND THE MAMA BEAR • PHOEBE HUNT & THE GATHERERS
BOURBON + MUSIC + FOOD
WWW.BOURBONANDBEYOND.COM



DeMarco, CHVRCHES, The Voidz, Blood Orange, DJ Koze, Stephen Malkmus & the Jicks, Dream Wife, more pitchforkmusicfestival.fr

UTOPIAfest
11/2-4 // Burnet, TX
STS9, Patty Griffin, Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real, Grandmaster Flash, Valerie June, Keller Williams, John Medeski's Mad Skillet, Rubblebucket, more
utopiafest.com

Iceland Airwaves
11/7-10 // Reykjavík, Iceland
Blood Orange, Cashmere Cat, Fever Ray, Jockstrap, Snail Mail, Soccer Mommy, Superorganism, The Voidz, more
icelandairwaves.is

Hard Rock Hell
11/8-11 // North Wales, U.K.
Femme Fatale, Girlschool, Phil Campbell and the Bastard Sons, Tygers of Pan Tang, Rock Goddess, The Vintage Caravan, Blitzkrieg, Hawklords, more
hardrockhell.com

Le Guess Who?
11/8-11 // Utrecht, Netherlands
Art Ensemble of Chicago, Devendra Banhart, The Breeders, Mudhoney, Kojey Radical, Ebo Taylor, Anoushka Shankar & Manu Delago with MO Strings, more
leguesswho.nl

Corona Capital
11/17-18 // Mexico City, Mexico
Robbie Williams, Lorde, The Chemical Brothers, ODESZA, The Kooks, Panic! at the Disco, Jenny Lewis, Pond, more
coronacapital.com.mx

Closer to the Sun
11/30-12/4 // Riviera Maya, Mexico
Slightly Stoopid, UB40, Michael Franti & Spearhead, Thievery Corporation, Stick Figure, Alborosie, G. Love & Special Sauce, more
closertothesun.com

Strings & Sol
12/7-11 // Puerto Morelos, Mexico
Yonder Mountain String Band, Greensky Bluegrass, Railroad Earth, The Infamous Stringdusters, Leftover Salmon, Billy Strings, more
stringsandsol.com

Holidaze
12/12-16 // Puerto Morelos, Mexico
The Disco Biscuits, STS9, Umphrey's McGee, Lotus, Pigeons Playing Ping Pong, Ghost Light, Orchard Lounge, more
holidazerocks.com

WinterWonderGrass Vermont
12/14-16 // Stratton, VT
Railroad Earthm, The Infamous Stringdusters, more
winterwondergrass.com

Holy Ship!
1/5-9, 1/9-12 // Port Canaveral, FL
AC Slater, Ardalan, Claude Vonstroke, Chris Lorenzo, Justin Martin, Subset & the Instigators, Walker & Royce, Will Clarke, more
holyship.com

(R) Jam Cruise 17
1/15-21 // Miami, FL
Umphrey's McGee, Galactic, Karl Denson's Tiny Universe, Kamasi Washington, Khruangbin, Hot Tuna Electric with Steve Kimock, Leftover Salmon, The Motet, more
jamcruise.com

Island Exodus 10
1/20-24 // Runaway Bay, Jamaica
Gov't Mule, Warren Haynes, The Marcus King Band, Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real, Ron Holloway, more
islandexodus.com
Festival Facts: For their 10th Island Exodus event, Gov't Mule promise "more music than ever before, including special, intimate, one-of-a-kind performances and an increased number of interactive activities involving many of the musicians on hand." Special events include Warren Haynes' afternoon "storytellers" set and an appearance by Ron Holloway and MKB's Dean Mitchell as Sax On The Beach.

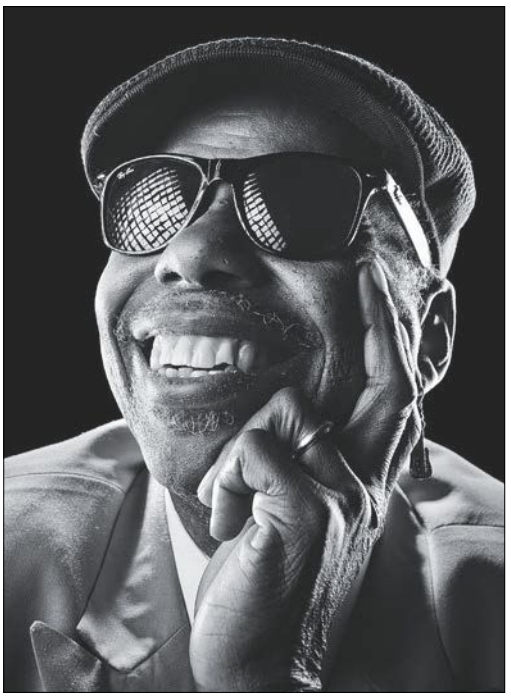
The Rock Boat
2/1-6 // Tampa, FL
Andrew McMahon in the Wilderness, Matt Nathanson, Plain White T's, Atlas Genius, Red Wanting Blue, Magic Giant, Alan Doyle, Kevin Devine, more
therockboat.com

Legendary Rhythm & Blues Cruise
2/3-10 // Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Taj Mahal & The Phantom Blues Band, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Irma Thomas & The Professionals, Bobby Rush Revue with Benny Turner, more bluescruise.com

WALTER "WOLFMAN" WASHINGTON

THE JURY MAY STILL be out on whether an old dog can learn new tricks, but it's now been confirmed that an old wolf certainly can. When Walter "Wolfman" Washington, the 74-year-old New Orleans singer and guitarist, was getting ready to make his latest album, he asked his producer, Galactic's Ben Ellman, what he had in mind. Ellman took the veteran performer by surprise: He wanted Washington to venture out of his comfort zone of electric blues and R&B.

"He asked me: 'How would you like to do an acoustic recording?'" Washington says. "I said, 'I just don't know what material I'm gonna have.' But Ben said, 'Don't worry about that. I'm gonna get you some.'" Washington then asked the producer who they could get to play on the sessions. "Don't worry about that either," Ellman told him. "I'll get all the musicians together. All you have to do is show up." Washington not only showed up, but also killed it. *My Future Is My Past* (Anti-) is unlike any other album Washington has cut during his five-plus decades in the business. Several of its 10 tracks are stripped down to duo or even solo configurations; the production emphasizes Washington's intimate baritone vocal delivery, recorded close sans much ornamentation. Guests do step in, but they're just there to augment: Irma Thomas shares a duet with Washington on "Even Now," which also features the album's standby rhythm section of Galactic drummer Stanton Moore, bassist James Singleton and pianist David Torkanowsky. Fellow New Orleans mainstay Jon Cleary contributes keyboards to a couple of tracks, including "I Cried My Last Tear," written



by Allen Toussaint. (The song was previously recorded by Washington's late cousin, NOLA R&B legend Ernie K-Doe.) And Ivan Neville adds his Fender Rhodes to "She's Everything to Me," co-written by Doc Pomus and Dr. John.

But throughout, the focus remains on the star of the show. "As long as I've known him, I'd never seen him play acoustic," says Ellman, who worked with Washington previously on Galactic's 2010 *Ya-Ka-May* album. "So that was the agenda. The context of just him and an acoustic guitar opened up these possibilities. I loved all that space he commanded; there's so much intensity within that space. There are no funk songs, nothing super swingy. The biggest challenge of this record was to not go there."

Washington's reimagining of "What a Diff'rence a Day Makes," a standard written in 1934 but best known from singer Dinah Washington's 1959 hit, is a clear highlight. For this one, Washington is accompanied only by Singleton's bass and Mike Dillon's vibraphone and percussion. Another standout is "I Just Dropped by to Say Hello," a song associated with jazz singer Johnny Hartman. Ellman says that Hartman's warm and rich vocal style, and the Muddy Waters album *Folk Singer*—which found the blues icon working in an acoustic setting—served as inspirations for *My Future Is My Past*.

For Washington, the experience was refreshing and rejuvenating. "I enjoyed it," he says about the making of the album. "I was mostly into funk and blues, but to record something like this, man, is really a treat for me. I've been wanting to do it for the longest time."

Most fans who've seen Washington perform in recent decades have likely experienced him fronting the Roadmasters, his longtime stage band. But he was already well into his career by the time he teamed with them. Washington was in his teens when he began playing behind New Orleans hitmaker Lee Dorsey. "That period in my life was definitely a thrill for me," Washington remembers. "I had my first professional gig at [Harlem's] Apollo Theater. I was playing little local clubs, making like 10 dollars for a gig, so when my mama told me I was able to go to New York, I said, 'Oh, man, this is gonna be something else!' We just took over the hotel we were staying at; it was my first time in New York, so I wasn't going to sleep!"

After that, Washington turned pro. "I saw my house three times in two years," he says. It was during this period that he took on his nickname. "At that time, I had the nickname Wah-Wah," he says. "I'd be going around challenging all the guitar players: 'Can you play like this?' Then I told them what my nickname was and they said, 'No, that's not cool enough. We just gonna start calling you Wolf."

Washington accompanied fellow New Orleans artist Johnny Adams for 20 years and played with Thomas and others but, finally, in the early-'80s, he decided it was time to become a frontman. "I was just an unknown guitar player. I was basically on the road, playing smaller clubs," he says. "You really didn't get a chance to get recognized. I came back home and started playing [with my own band], and that's when people started recognizing who I was."

Ellman was one of those hometown fans who took notice. "I came to New Orleans in '89, from California, and I saw Walter play at the Maple Leaf [club], where he was playing every Saturday with a full band with a horn section. I was just totally floored," he says. "I thought, 'I can't believe that this exists in the world.' New Orleans knew, but the world didn't know. He's always been a dude around New Orleans who's had an amazing band. He's been a working musician constantly. He's really a New Orleans treasure."

WHITE DENIM *Performance* BY DEAN BUDNICK

"WE TRY NOT TO over-intellectualize anything," White Denim's James Petralli discloses as he reflects on the material that his band drew from to create their new record, *Performance*. "But this album is also a representation of who we are as people. We like rock-and-roll, but we also like to think about what we're saying, with the instruments and the voice. It's *for* other people, obviously, but it's us. We're presenting ourselves—we're not a showbiz kind of show-band."

The group, which also features co-founder and bassist Steve Terebecki, keyboardist Michael Hunter and drummer Conrad Choucroun, recorded *Performance* at their Radio Milk studio. "It's an old house in Austin that was built in 1902," Petralli explains. "We renovated it so it's got a really homey vibe, but it's weirdly stuck in the middle of downtown, though not among the skyscrapers. So the album, and the antiquated gear that we used, captured that time capsule feeling. We were just rehearsing, writing and arranging together in the same room, trying to get real, breathing music on tape."

MAGAZIN

It started with this T-Rex-y groove on the electric guitar and then, we had this buddy of ours named Jared Samuel, who played in The Ghost of a Saber Tooth Tiger, add this pretty cool Mellotron part that ended up being the saxophone part.

I got the idea for the lyrics from the multiple meanings of the word magazine. When we were in Europe, I saw the word without the "e" and looked it up, and it means "closet" or "garbage dump." So that's why we left the "e" off, hoping that somebody might go a little bit under the surface of the *US Weekly* interpretation of magazine.

PERFORMANCE

Steve wrote the music for this one. He's always writing these snakey, super-fast punk tunes, and this is one of those. "Performance," to me, is a really tight pop-punk tune in the vein of Squeeze or XTC, more than Blink-182. The lyric is messing with definitions of "performance" as well, just taking a single word, interpreting it a few different ways and seeing what feelings come out when doing that.

FINE SLIME

"Fine Slime" is another one where Steve had the riff. It features Sam Cohen on electric guitar—our new drummer, Conrad, is Sam's cousin. We did some touring with Sam on the last record and liked his style. We even tried to get him to join the band, but the best we could do was get him on the sessions, which is great. He's just a cool dude and he brought a great energy to that track.

"Fine Slime" has got this weirdo, almost rappy Prince vibe to it, but then there's also a Steppenwolf section—there's definitely this biker-bar energy in that track. And there are actually a few motorcycles in the recording. Before we went into the studio, we didn't realize we were right next to one of the busiest biker bars in Austin. So we'd be laying vocal takes down and, before we had our soundproofing or anything, we'd have to stop takes because the motorcycles were so loud. On this one, we ended up just embracing it and putting a motorcycle in the track.

DOUBLE DEATH

"Double Death" is a literary reference to this writer named Jorge Amado who wrote this book called *The Double Death of Quincas Water-Bray*. It's a funny, short novel—the plot is basically *Weekend at Bernie's* without the slapstick.

There's a good bookstore in the San Francisco airport, and that's where I picked it up and read it on a flight. I'll buy anything that's been put out by New Directions or Penguin Classics. It's the way I used to be with record labels, although there are still some labels you can trust. I used to buy everything on Thrill Jockey Records when I was a kid and I still have that mentality when I'm looking for books.

The lyrics and the title of "Double Death" deal with some bigger life concepts. The groove is just Meters-style funk—the beat flips every other bar. It is another one with Jared Samuel on the keyboard, which later became saxophone. He was using the Mellotron and he kept using the saxophone patch and was writing great parts. But then, a couple weeks later, I was like, "Hey, would you mind if we used like an actual saxophone instead of the pre-recorded fake saxophone?" And he was cool with it.

Eddie Harris [who appears with Les McCann on a notable version of "Compared to What" on their *Swiss Movement* album, recorded live at The Montreux Jazz Festival in 1969] has that record *Instant Death*. He always did the crazy, maestro effects on the horns and that was another happy coincidence with this one, referencing some of his horn sounds with those horns. I love that there was an overlap with Amado and Eddie Harris.

MOVES ON

I was excited about this one. I had all of the guitar parts worked out, and on the day of tracking, I wanted to do something that was cut time in the verses and had a proggier kind of refrain and feel, like that '70s prog stuff that we were messing around with on *D* eight years ago. So I brought it in, and Steve was like, "This sounds like Styx, man. This is like 'Mr. Roboto.'" I was like "Oh, shit! Well, I don't want to listen to that right now. Let's just see where it goes." We finished the track with him grinning the whole time because I couldn't remember anything other than "Thank you very much," the main hook from "Mr. Roboto."

At the end of the day, I was like, "Alright, let's fucking listen to Styx and see where we diverged." And I could hear why he was saying that, but we liked the tune and decided to keep it. It's lighthearted fun. It's not a very weighty idea that he put the moves on, kind of like a jealous lover thing. It's a fun jammer that

Continued on page 76

CHRIS HARFORD & BAND OF CHANGES

By LARSON SUTTON

"Perseverance brings good fortune"
– I Ching (Book of Changes)

"Flotation is groovy and easy"
– Jimi Hendrix, Band of Gypsys

Chris Harford smiles at the notion of pairing a 3,000-year-old Chinese text alongside the greatest guitar player of all-time. He drew the name of his long-running Band of Changes by hybridizing those two enduring founts of wisdom, and it's an apt moniker for his rotating project. The only constants in the lineup are Harford and change itself.

"He's a Central Jersey institution of sorts," says Scott Metzger, guitarist for WOLF! and Joe Russo's Almost Dead. Metzger met Harford as a teenager two decades ago and, shortly after, became one of the many musicians to hold membership in Band of Changes—Russo, Dean and Gene Ween, Ween/JRAD bassist Dave Dreiwitz, Morphine saxophonist Dana Colley and Robbie "Seahag" Mangano often shuttle through the revolving door.

"He's a guiding light," Metzger says. "Everybody plays with Chris."

Harford is an artist of various mediums. A painter and photographer as well as guitarist and songwriter, he's a master of finding connectivity in ostensibly disparate sources of inspiration and is as equally comfortable covering Lana Del Rey and Neil Young as he is collaborating with Pulitzer Prize-winning Irish poet Paul Muldoon. His solo career includes an early major-label deal and critical toasts alongside a quietly proceeding catalog spanning 20 years, available on his website for any price one is willing to pay—including nothing at all.

His Band of Changes functions with a correspondingly loose principle of the unknown until its known. Harford considers the availability and compatibility of personnel for a performance and leaves the in-the-moment mood of the room to determine the rest. Lineups fluctuate. Setlists are essentially nonexistent, if not pointless. Harford thrives on cultivating this sensation of perpetual discovery.

As JRAD have grown into a national attraction, Harford has also reached a new generation of fans weaned on classic rock and jamband music. Russo invited Harford to sit in with JRAD during an action-packed Brooklyn Bowl run in late 2016 and brought him out to showcase his music at The Capitol Theatre's Garcia's club space during their stand at the Port Chester, N.Y.-based institution this past January. Russo, Metzger and Dreiwitz have also formed the core of some of Harford's high-profile backing bands during a number of New York and New Jersey engagements and, this summer, the trio double dipped with JRAD and Band of Changes at both Scranton, Pa.'s Peach Music Festival and Arrington, Va.'s Lockn'. Russo told Harford he wanted to rock. "I know what that means when he says that," says Harford.

With his own deft ability to vacillate between mediums and styles, Harford recruits players who are capable of shifting from electric and heavy to acoustic and reserved—and anywhere in the space between—without any hesitation, or notice.

"Playing with [Russo, Metzger and Dreiwitz] is like being in the ocean," says Harford. "We can go anywhere and it's like liquid: fluid, flowing, transparent, moving and powerful."

Metzger agrees. "Chris is very encouraging of the guys in the band allowing where they are at as musicians to influence how they play the songs. In some ways, it's the most improvising band that I play with, or have ever played with."

Yet, some outside factors inevitably tilt Band of Changes' performances certain ways. Harford says he's inclined to steer the repertoire of a festival set according to the length of time onstage and where his set falls on the schedule. A 45-minute sunny afternoon at Lockn' isn't the same as late-night merriment at the Peach. Either way, it's always evolving up to and through when they set foot onstage.

"Absolutely a bonus, and part of the modus operandi, for sure," says Harford, of the spirit of unpredictability.

Harford checked out Band of Changes' spot on the Lockn' docket ahead of time and immediately noticed that he was a few slots before a personal favorite, George Clinton and P-Funk. "It is a great honor to share that [day] with them, to be included in such a thing," Harford says. "To be among this tribe is super fun."

Harford's latest release is 2016's *Horn of Plenty*, a nine-song collection tracked live at Room 17 Recording Studio in Brooklyn. Metzger, Russo and Dreiwitz were among the dozen players on the album, and Harford says he has tentative plans to record with them again soon. "These guys are getting so busy now and so popular that it's more challenging to get a commitment, understandably."

The future floats in and out of focus, groovy and easy; the art of knowing it is better not to know. Spontaneous shows are sure to bubble up out of nowhere—combinations of bandmates will coalesce in memorable momentary ensembles of freedom and fun, and then be gone until the next time or never again. Band of Changes will persevere.

"Put him up against anybody and his material holds its own on an emotional level," says Metzger. "And knowing that you are trusted by a bandleader is as crucial. Chris' respect for his band is on a rare level. That's why so many of us look forward to playing with him."

RELIX DIGITAL SAMPLER

Download the tracks for free at relix.com/jul-aug2018digital

1 DJ Criminal

"Fabric Softener" ft. Gift of Gab
From the album
Samples & Marbles
Self-Released

DJ Criminal's Phish-based turntablism is featured on Samples & Marbles, a free record featuring Gift of Gab of Blackalicious, Kool Keith, Blueprint, illogic and more. DJ Criminal plays festivals and shows all over the world, from Egypt to Tokyo, laying down funk, soul and grooves.

Djcriminal.com

2 The Punchbowl

"Until I End My Song"
From the album *The Punchbowl*
Self-Released

The Punch Bowl is a 4-piece band from Sussex NJ who play a mix of grunge, progressive rock, and Americana. With two guitars and a driving rhythm section, *The Punchbowl* write unique songs blending poetry and attitude. Their first, self-titled album was self-released in May 2018.

Thepunchbowl.bandcamp.com

3 Kwame Binea Shakedown

"Happy Lips"
Single
PeLoPos Entertainment Group

"Mix rock-and-roll with silky soul, screaming blues with folk and you get Kwame Binea," says The Apollo Theater. The West London-born singer-songwriter and his NYC/NJ band Shakedown, have been captivating audiences with their electrifying live shows for years. Look out for KBSD in a city near you!

kwamebineashakedown.com

4 Lost Lakes

"Whiskey River"
From the album *Lost Lakes*
Self Relesed

Lost Lakes is a collaboration between Corey Mathew Hart and Paul Mitch. The duo has evolved into a strong songwriting team with a focus on well-crafted songs with tight vocal harmonies. *Lost Lakes'* self-titled debut record bears witness to their talents and proves the whole can be greater than the sum of its parts.

lostlakesmusic.com

5 Jupiter & Okwess

"Nzele Momi"
From the album *Kin Sonic*
Everloving

With their second album *Kin Sonic*, Jupiter & Okwess transcend the Congo's unexplored musical heritage and dive into a pool of modernity. It's a recipe based on perfect alchemy, enriched by contributions from Damon Albarn (Blur/ Gorillaz), violinist Warren Ellis (Nick Cave's Bad Seeds) and Robert del Naja (Massive Attack).

Everloving.com

6 Chamomile and Whiskey

"Nelson County"
From the album *Sweet Afton*
County Wide Records

Originating in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, Chamomile and Whiskey combine southern-rock and country with Irish and gypsy sounds. They have garnered attention with their rowdy live shows and powerful songwriting, and their most recent release "*Sweet Afton*" was named an Americana pick of 2017 by the Huffington Post.

chamomileandwhiskey.com

7 Bosley

"Golden Brown"
From the album *Unreal Fire*
Morphius Records

Bosley Brown is the soulful alter-ego of American singer, songwriter and producer Thomas Mayer. Bosley's third album, *Unreal Fire*, dances between the old and the new taking the vintage sounds of Stax and Motown and combining it with contemporary Pop appeal.
Stay Groovy Y'all.

Bosleybaltimore.bandcamp.com

8 Freddy & Francine

"Half A Mind"
From the album *Moonless Night*
Self-Released

Classically-trained singers Freddy & Francine (Lee Ferris & Bianca Caruso) were entrenched in the Los Angeles music community for many years. The duo's recent relocation to Nashville injected new energy and new attitude into their infectious blend of soul, pop, folk, and Americana, which shines brightly on their new Dan Knobler-produced EP *Moonless Night*, out September 7.

Freddyandfrancine.com

9 Brontë Fall

"Grand Marnier"
Single
Self-Released

Founded by lead singer and songwriter, Teri Bracken, Brontë Fall is an Indie-Pop/ Americana group out of Chicago. Named after the Brontë Sisters, outspoken female authors who dared to have a voice in a time when women didn't, Bracken strives for a dialogue that is unedited, honest, and modern. The band's 2018 release, Grand Marnier, steps more definitively into an Americana realm than any previous work.

Brontefall.com

10 Stuck On A Name

"Back In Time"
From the album *Send Dem Reggae*
Self-Released

In June of 2017 Stuck On A Name released their first full-length studio album *Send Dem Reggae*. Though their sound is new, they keep it real with respectful roots rock reggae traditions. This style surges through their original music.

Find more information at
StuckOnAName.com.

11 Ry Taylor

"Take Out Your Tongue"
From the album *Take Out Your Tongue*
Howlin Dog Records

Ry Taylor has been playing music for family and friends since he was 10 years old, a gift from his father, well-known northern New Mexico singer songwriter Rod Taylor. Today Ry continues to play for the public, composing and performing his own songs. Born and raised in Cimarron, NM on Philmont Scout Ranch, Ry now lives in Taos, NM and celebrates the local music scene. Ry's genre has been best described as Acoustic Groove, Americana, Latin Jazz, Alternative Rock, and then some...

Rytaylormusic.com

12 Cody Williams

"Wishing Well"
From the album *Wishing Well*
Bone Nest Music

A recording artist and a producer, Cody Williams has a distinctive sound with an experimental feel, seamlessly merging different genres including electronic music, breakbeat, neo-soul, hip-hop, R&B, new wave, and D&B. There's a distinct funkiness in his tracks as well, particularly in pieces like "HiLikeMe," which feels as though it would be equally at home on the soundtrack of an old time Commodore 64 game, as much as on the dance floor, where it would be the slow-down last track of the evening.

bonenest.com

MAGIC CITY HIPPIES

By RYAN REED

MAGIC CITY HIPPIES were on a creative high after finishing their sultry synth-funk single "Body Like a Weapon." There was only one problem: They had no idea how to play it, but they had a gig booked that very week. "We write songs in the studio," says guitarist John Coughlin. "All the stuff goes through Logic on the computer, so we have to learn our songs after we release them. This time, we learned this song and, in three days, we were playing it at a gig."

That sense of resourcefulness has defined the band from the beginning. Frontman Robby Hunter started out playing on the streets of Miami, utilizing loop pedals and the strength of his malleable rap-to-croon voice. But after facing resistance from the local police, he ditched his DIY solo setup, recruiting Coughlin and producer/drummer Pat Howard for regular gigs at a neighborhood bar. The newly formed Robby Hunter Band built a local following with their funky, beachy vibe, highlighted on their debut LP, *Magic City Hippies*. But as their sound evolved, incorporating elements of indie-rock and electronica, the trio deemed it fitting to rebrand themselves. They harnessed the buzz of their self-titled 2015 EP into a massive number of Spotify streams and major festival slots, including an ever-coveted Bonnaroo set in 2017.

What began as lighthearted one-man-band busking has evolved into a democratic project. "Body Like a Weapon," for example, originated from a random evening Howard spent in Magic City Hippies' communal studio space, building sounds while his bandmates were out on their respective date nights.

"We're at the studio probably four or five nights a week," the drummer says. "It's this nocturnal ritual. Date night is sacred. It's usually a Tuesday, but sometimes someone has to switch. I just didn't get the memo one night, and I was at the studio waiting for the guys to show up. We always have a pile of songs to chip away at and finish. It was a freeing thing, like, 'I'm not supposed to be here right now,' and I had this blank canvas. I ended up with this kinda Gorillaz-y [track]."

Howard built parts of the song with a newly acquired Prophet 12 synthesizer, and he and Coughlin finished the lyrics at work through instant messaging. With its thick analog synth-bass sound, wildly distorted guitar riffs and a rapped Hunter verse that his bandmates liken to Kendrick Lamar, "Body Like a Weapon" is another left turn in their catalog—coked-out yacht-rock with a menacing edge. But with the singer's velvety falsetto and strong emphasis on groove, it retains the funk element that defined their early work.

Hunter admits he felt uncomfortable at first relinquishing creative control of the project. But as Magic City Hippies have grown in both style and in sheer size—onstage, they now feature the bass-keyboard duo The Flying Bellesario Brothers, who help approximate their layered studio arrangements—he's appreciated being able to expand the band's scope.

"It's definitely been a process—maybe, at first, I was a little more hesitant," he says. "I always like to throw my paint on the canvas first, and I'm usually pretty open to having my song destroyed and recreated again. It might be some cheesy acoustic song, and we'll go, 'No, no, no.' I'm pretty used to that, but now we're venturing into [having the other members] write verses, melodies and choruses. We've been having success so far, so we should keep doing it. We all have an equal voices."

"Robby was bearing with me early on," Howard says. "I came from making hip-hop beats, and they weren't that great at first. I wanted to produce. There are a couple of things in the vault from way back where Robby is solo beatboxing with a Boss RC-50 and looping. There were a lot of iterations of some of those early ideas and attempts at making producer arrangements of Robby's songs. It just took a couple years of sucking at it."

Hunter finds it more challenging to stay outspoken about his political views without alienating his fans—particularly when the funkiness of their music often serves as a form of escapism. "I like that framing of it," he says. "I don't want the band to be political. [When people hear our music], I don't want them to worry. I want them to escape and feel amazing and dance. We have friends in bands who are really big 'Trumpies.' And we may have our little political tit-for-tat here and there, but we're still friends. You can exist in two different realms, and still come together on a different topic. The funk transcends."

JORDAN WOLOWITZ

By BRADLEY TUCKER

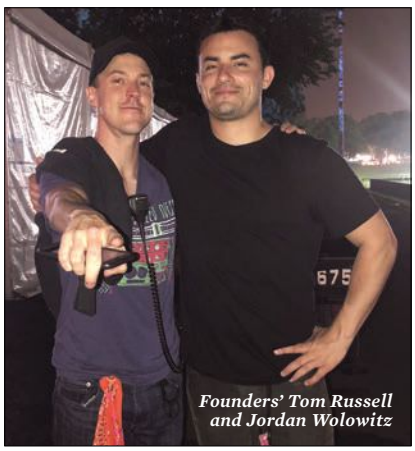
IN 2010, JORDAN Wolowitz and his childhood friend Tom Russell quit their jobs to focus on a festival concept that was relatively new to the New York market. Their goal was to cater to music fans in their 20s, focusing on cool, modern bands in the electronic, hip-hop and indie-rock spaces. And, unlike other promoters who had tried to make it by staging their events in the areas surrounding New York, they were adamant about hosting their show in the city proper.

So they created Founders Entertainment and, in 2011, staged the first Governors Ball Music Festival on Governors Island, a gorgeous piece of land located 800 yards from Lower Manhattan. The event was financially successful in its first year—a rare feat—and well received by fans, artists and the city alike. Since relocating to its permanent home on Randalls Island the next year, Gov Ball has become a key part of the New York City music landscape and has attracted many notable acts such as Jack White, The Strokes, Lorde, Guns N' Roses, Outkast, Phoenix, My Morning Jacket, Ryan Adams, Gary Clark Jr., The Killers and Tool.

What was your first job in the music business and what lead you to that?

Even though it was an unpaid internship, my first job was interning for Atlantic Records after my freshman year in college. I did all sorts of internships throughout college, whether it was for a record label or for a promoter.

After graduating from college, I moved out west to Monterey, Calif., where I worked at Monterey [Peninsula Artists]. They had just started their transition over to Paradigm. I started off in the back office and I did accounts and things of that nature. About a year or two into being there, I had an itch to move home to New York to pursue my goals in the industry and went to work for Marsha Vlasic. Her company had just been acquired by ICM, and she was building out a rock division and needed an assistant. So I moved home in 2010 and started working on her desk.



Founders' Tom Russell and Jordan Wolowitz

It was around that time when Tom and I had started putting together the idea for the first Governors Ball. We'd been friends since high school, and our senior year was when the first Bonnaroo took place. That obviously was a huge inspiration to a lot of kids in the live music scene around my age. We'd always said that we wanted be the first people to crack the code to doing a successful contemporary festival in our town, New York City. We hadn't lived in the same place since high school—he went to school and worked in New Orleans for a while—but once we were both back in New York, we started putting together the idea for Gov Ball.

Can you talk about the early planning for the first Gov Ball.

Dealing with Governors Island was actually pretty straightforward. They had a committee there that was set up to deal with promoters and producers who wanted to stage live events. We also had a relationship with some of the guys who had already built stages and done some events out there in previous years, so we utilized those relationships. We were definitely young and wet behind the ears.

However, we weren't totally going into it blindly. In terms of operating a show, Tom had been Rick Farman's right-hand man at Superfly and, for all intents and purposes, he had already built a relatively small two-stage show. On my end, I'd worked with booking agents and volunteered on the program board at my college so I had some experience booking bands and cutting and tapering deals.

But when you compare the very first Gov Ball to what Governors Ball is now, they're very different shows. The first Gov Ball was one day and there were two stages. None of the acts would have been considered mainstream at that time. We only had two golf carts for our entire crew. There was a lot of running around on foot. I wish someone did a documentary on it because, if you looked back on it, we'd probably either laugh or shake our heads in embarrassment about how bare bones it was.

But you pulled it off.

I think we needed around 12,000 people to show up to make sure we didn't lose any money, and we ended up getting 18,000 and change. So it was a very successful first-year show—not only financially, but also because people had a great experience.

Our intention the first year was to put on a show that people our age would enjoy. The reason we were successful that first year was because we marketed and produced it with that in mind.

What's the best part about your job and what's the worst part?

The best part of my job is getting to do something that I really enjoy. Nobody at Founders takes their job for granted—not everyone can do exactly what they want to do for a living and we're lucky that, when we wake up, we're doing exactly what we wanted to do when we were in college.

I don't even know if it's the worst part, but there's always just a lot of stress when you're running your own company. If you're an entrepreneur building your own businesses, it's always on *you* whether you're going to succeed or not. I wouldn't have it any other way and I don't think Tom would either, but the pressure that you put on yourself as creator/entrepreneur can be a lot sometimes. It also keeps the job really exciting. I try not to get too stressed out—I should probably try meditation.

How has your job changed from when you started?

In terms of the festival market, there's just a lot of traffic right now. It's on festival creators and promoters to make sure that the events they're developing and putting into the market are unique, and that they are doing what every business should do. Their job is to fill a void in the market and satisfy customer demand. If you're just putting things out into the market that have no need and the market is not calling for it, then you're almost weakening the greater good. When we started Gov Ball, we saw a void in the marketplace and we filled it. But I think everyone needs to be careful that there's real demand before they decide to launch a new event or a new festival.

TOWER OF POWER

A half century after busting out of the Bay Area, the funk/soul collective are still content to sound like themselves

By **JEFF TAMARKIN**

MOST BANDS THAT STICK around for any length of time pride themselves on their evolution—the goal is to keep moving forward, change up the formula and try new things. For Tower of Power, that's never been a top priority. As they celebrate their 50th anniversary, ToP 2018 isn't all that different from ToP 1968. And that's just fine with tenor saxophonist Emilio Castillo, one of four co-founding members—along with baritone saxophonist Stephen "Doc" Kupka, drummer David Garibaldi and bassist Francis "Rocco" Prestia—still involved with the group.

"We make the music exactly the way we want it to be," says Castillo. "We don't chase trends. We had a little period in the late-'70s when the record companies were trying to get us to be like the other bands. They were giving us a lot of money and we wanted to please them. But even when we tried to do that, we always sounded like ourselves. So I told the guys: 'Let's just make the music the way we make it.' We realized that sounding like ourselves is not a curse. It's a blessing."

Soul Side of Town (Artistry/Mack Avenue), Tower of Power's recently released 25th album, is consistent with the Oakland, Calif.-based funk/soul collective's classic output for Warner Bros. and Columbia Records in the 1970s. The renowned ToP horn section—who have been recruited by everyone from Aerosmith to Elton John, Phish, Little Feat, Santana and numerous others—is still the tightest in the business. And the group's newest singer, Marcus Scott—who shares vocal duties on the album with Ray Greene, who has since joined Santana—is as soulful as all of those who've graced past Tower of Power lineups.

But for Castillo, "the biggest statement, musically, is the rhythm section," he says. "We did things rhythmically—and we continue to do them—that other bands don't do. We get inventive with the bass line and with the guitar lines. That's really, to me, the significant difference in the way we sound. That's why when they want us to be like the other bands, we couldn't sound like that. We didn't do that okeydokey beat."

The band started out in 1968 as the Motowns, and although gigs came quickly in the East Bay, they knew that they needed to find a foothold over in San Francisco, where the psychedelic-rock scene was in full bloom. Although Tower of Power didn't sound anything like the Dead, Jefferson Airplane or Big Brother and the Holding Company, they hoped that their solid musicianship and exciting stage show would catch on with audiences across the Bay. With a name change to Tower of Power, the new band found an early champion in Bill Graham, proprietor of the Fillmore West, who began booking them as often as possible.

"Bill Graham had tweaked the collective ear of the Bay Area by having these concerts where you'd see the Grateful Dead with Miles Davis and Sam and Dave," says Castillo. "Then you'd see Quicksilver Messenger Service and Buddy Miles and Yusef Lateef. He'd have all this eclectic stuff, and everybody was so open at that time that they were just eating it up. By the time we came around, the whole psychedelic thing had run its course and they were ready for something new."

Graham signed Tower of Power to his own short-lived San Francisco Records and released their debut album, *East Bay Grease*, in 1970. A move to Warner Bros. followed and, by the early '70s, each of ToP's new releases—including 1972's *Bump City*, their self-titled follow-up, '74's *Back to Oakland* and the same year's *Urban Renewal*—had garnered rave reviews and found their way to the upper reaches of the Billboard album charts. Onstage, funk workouts like "Down to the Nightclub" and "What Is Hip?" and gorgeous soul ballads such as "Sparkling in the Sand" and "You're Still a Young Man" were drawing increasingly large, dedicated audiences. "Even when things were tough for us, we were always able to play live," says Castillo.

Now, with a half-century behind them, the ensemble's only plan is to keep on funkin'. In early June, the band returned to Oakland's Fox Theater for a two-night anniversary celebration, during which they invited several former members back into the fold. And Castillo is rightfully proud of *Soul Side of Town*. Six years in the making, the album represents a musical outfit that has rarely faltered and still has plenty to say. "We were due for a record," Castillo says, "but we're a working band and we could only get in the studio here and there for the first three years. I was going to record 25 songs and pick 12 killers. It wound up being 28, and they came out so good that the record company liked them all. So we're putting out two records. The next one is already mixed and mastered, sequenced and ready to go."

And then what? "I'm going to do it till I can't do it no more," Castillo says. "I was touring with B.B. King some years ago and I saw him get off the bus, and he could barely walk. They were helping him get up onstage. But when he got up onstage, he was like a 32-year-old man. He bopped till he dropped. I'll be doing the same thing until I can't do it. When I can't do it, then I'll stop."

5 ARTISTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

EMMA LOUISE CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA

My Weird Journey

Fans of **Emma Louise**—best known for her hit "Jungle" and its countless remixes—may not recognize her on her upcoming third album, *Lilac Everything*. And for good reason: The voice singing these 10 vintage-tinged pop songs isn't hers. Allow Louise to explain. "For years, I toyed around with this vocal idea I called 'Joseph.' I was laying the final harmonies on the new album and randomly we pitched down just a snippet. I said 'Fuck it, we'll do the whole album,'" she says, calling from her eight-acre farm outside Byron Bay. Indeed, moments before wrapping *Lilac Everything*, Louise decided to electronically shift down the tone of her voice, creating a warm, androgynous new persona. Joseph wasn't Louise's only new trick on the album either. Following 2016's *Supercry*, Louise decamped to a seaside town near Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, where she met Joe and Manny Hadlock, owners of Seattle's beloved Bear Creek studio.

"They kind of adopted me, and showed me Carole King, James Taylor, Paul Simon—all these classic singer-songwriters. I listened over and over, alone in Mexico, and it started this whole new train of songwriting," she says. After singer-songwriter Tobias Jesso Jr. appeared in a dream, she messaged him on Instagram—soon the two were in Los Angeles, arranging what would become *Lilac Everything* and building rich, organic and timeless blends of piano, brushed percussion and muted guitars. Along with engineer Shawn Everett (Alabama Shakes) and Jesso's band, they moved the party, naturally, to Bear Creek.

The sessions were loose and easy with the crew "drinking six bottles of wine every night," says Louise. But it wasn't until months later, after returning to LA for the finishing touches, that Joseph surfaced. "My label, my friends—everyone had heard the album and loved it. But suddenly, I said, 'Hold up, it's gonna sound a little different,'" Louise says. Her alter-ego vocals strike a buttery, ethereal tone—like Jeff Buckley dialed down to a whisper—matching these hushed, haunting piano-led folk songs. Playful cuts like "Gentlemen" are pure schoolyard Paul Simon, with Louise cooing, "Let me tell you about a man that doesn't say much. Doesn't speak with his words, but he speaks with his touch." And as for any confused fans? "I'm doing my part—to be honest to myself as an artist," she says. "I hope they can support me on my weird journey."

emmalouise.net ***Justin Jacobs***

MIKAELA DAVIS

ROCHESTER, N.Y.

Unorthodox Eclecticism

Mikaela Davis is a classically trained harpist and, on paper, her instrument's dulcet plucks are the most intriguing element of her songwriting. But the singer-songwriter tends to shrug at that part of her narrative. "I just happen to play that instrument," she says. "If I grew up playing guitar, I'd probably still be writing similar songs. But I didn't pick up a guitar; I picked up a harp instead. It's the instrument I know best." The harp's ethereal timbre inherently provides a distinct vehicle for the funk grooves, folky balladry and New Wave hooks that populate her debut LP, *Delivery*. But that eclecticism—how she brandishes the instrument in such unorthodox contexts—is what makes the album tick. Working with her live bandmates (drummer **Alex Coté** and bassist **Shane McCarthy**), veteran indie-rock producer John Congleton, and featuring The Staves on two tracks, Davis pushed herself to experiment by running her harp through studio effects and guitar pedals. On "Get Gone," her harp warbles over a thick porno soundtrack strut, building to a bluesy chorus. And on the album's immediate pop standout "Do You Wanna Be Mine," her swooping chords intertwine with the atmospheric tones of a vintage Juno synthesizer. In an era when most rock listeners couldn't name a modern harpist without the aid of Google, Davis obviously stands out on a literal level—and she's made the most of her unique skill in recent years, appearing onstage alongside artists like Bon Iver, Punch Brothers and Lake Street Dive. And witnessing a crowd's confusion always fills her with satisfaction. "People usually think the music is going to be more quiet," she says. "But when we play live, we're more like a rock band, so people are surprised—it's something they don't expect." mikaeladavis.com ***Ryan Reed***

MUNGION CHICAGO

May the Force Be With You

Chicago quartet **Mungion** (pronounced 'Mung-yin') sold out their hometown venue Tonic Room three nights in a row—without repeating a single song—before they had even been a band for three years. And singer and guitarist **Justin Reckamp** could not have been more enthusiastic about their recent victory. "The band was just really excited to play our first three-night run in our home city for all of our friends and family," he says. "Once we start feeding off of the crowd, there is an unexplainable back and forth that takes place. The end goal is to construct something in the moment that is created by the band and the crowd alike." Mungion's most devoted fans, who are known as the Mung Force, feel equally invested in the experience. Last fall, a mere weeks before beginning their first headlining tour, the band's van and trailer were stolen in Detroit, along with all of their gear and a lighting rig that can only be described as "not cheap." The financial damage of the robbery was north of $41,000, but the Mung Force kicked into action—after starting a GoFundMe campaign, they managed to raise more than $33,000. Reckamp, **Joe Re** (keyboards/vocals), **Sean Carolan** (bass/vocals) and **Matt Kellen** (drums/vocals) technically formed Mungion during the spring of 2015, though the four musicians have been balancing their jamband-friendly mix of technical prowess, deep improvisation and fun, onstage theatrics for far longer. "We all started at the Parn Kournt Method School around the age of 8, and we did that until we were around 21 years old. We learned a lot there; I even did a weeklong course on slap bass fundamentals," Carolan says with a smile. "The school year was 730 days long."

mungion.com ***Chad Weisman***

HORSESHOES & HAND GRENADES

STEVENS POINT, WIS.

Progressive, New-Time, Old-Time Music

It's late winter, and **Adam Greuel**, guitarist, dobroist and singer of **Horseshoes & Hand Grenades**, is enjoying some rare time off the road by tapping his parents' 700 maple trees, helping with the family business: syrup. "It's that time in Wisconsin," he laughs. His band has just dropped *The Ode*, a collection of tight, winding bluegrass tunes and gorgeous acoustic ballads produced by Trampled by Turtles' Dave Simonett and released on Tape Time Records, the newly minted label of The Infamous Stringdusters. All signs point to 2018 being Horseshoes & Hand Grenades' biggest year yet—meaning that much needed time grounded in nature, and surrounded by family, is more important than ever. The synchronicity that led to *The Ode* might seem too good to be true if modern bluegrass weren't such a harmonious community. In early 2017, Horseshoes & Hand Grenades were sitting on a pile of songs begging to be recorded—but they didn't have a label to support them. The art couldn't wait, and they booked studio time in Minnesota on their own dime. "We had the most relaxing, energetic sessions we'd ever experienced," says Greuel. "The only word you could use was 'magical.'" They recorded, mixed and mastered the album, but still didn't know how to release it until they spoke with their tourmates The Infamous Stringdusters, whose Tape Time Records was up and running and needed its first official release. "Sometimes, time just works in your favor," says Greuel. "The perfect situation came out of nowhere, and now we're releasing the album with people we truly look up to." *The Ode*'s immediacy and joy is apparent from its first seconds—the title track bursts out of the gate with cartwheeling fiddle and speed-walking bass under thick, bright harmonies. It's a blend of the past and present and all heart, with songs about ex-lovers, millennials and the tragedy and triumph of Standing Rock. Or as Greuel says, "Progressive, new-time old-time music."

hhgmusic.com ***Justin Jacobs***

Kelsey Hart (Soccer Mommy)

SOCCER MOMMY NASHVILLE

Akin to a Humid Summer Night in the South

"When it first began, I was really figuring stuff out," **Sophie Allison** says of her project **Soccer Mommy**. "I was building a sound from what naturally came to me, so it was a little bit less fulfilled. Now, I know what I want so the sound is a lot bigger and a lot more distinctly mine. There's a warmth to my style, but with some underlying darkness and anxiety too." Allison, who has released music as Soccer Mommy since 2015, grew up in Nashville and wanted her latest LP, this year's *Clean*, to reflect her regional roots, even if the music has a more indie-pop feel. Her goal was to make *Clean* "sound like the feeling of a humid summer night in the South," and she took inspiration from her own life and experiences when penning the lyrics. "I just take little moments that remind me of a feeling and piece them together to capture it," she notes. Although Soccer Mommy isn't strictly pop music, Allison does take cues from Nashville's more accessible sounds. On *Clean*, she used a full band in the studio, translating the music from her bedroom into a grander experience alongside producer Gabe Wax. "My songs are accessible and catchy, but they also use elements from a lot of genres," she says. "Pop is a style that is fun and upbeat to listen to, and I think my music sometimes can be that." This summer, Soccer Mommy balanced dates with Paramore and Liz Phair and, no matter her audience, Allison always surrenders herself when playing live, a sensibility that gives the album's tracks an infusion of passion every night onstage. "When something sounds right in a live setting, it's a real rush for me," she says. "And it allows me to lose myself in the moment a bit."

sopharela.bandcamp.com ***Emily Zemler***

TAUK

SHAPESHIFTER II: OUTBREAK

OUT 9/28
ON CD/LP/DIGITAL

PREORDER AT
WWW.TAUKBAND.COM
FOR A LTD EDITION HAT
AND MUSIC BUNDLE

OUTBREAK TOUR

9.1 NORTH COAST MUSIC FESTIVAL
CHICAGO, IL

9.2 NATURAL LAND FESTIVAL
ALEXANDER, AR

9.7 WATERLOO FESTIVAL
AUSTIN, TX

9.8 RED ROCKS AMPHITHEATRE
MORRISON, CO // SUPPORTING STS9

9.15 WORMTOWN MUSIC FESTIVAL
GREENFIELD, MA

9.21+22 RESONANCE MUSIC & ARTS FEST
THORNVILLE, OH

9.29 MEETING OF THE MINDS
SCHUYLKILL HAVEN, PA

10.4 THE MUSIC HALL @ FUNK 'N WAFFLES
ROCHESTER, NY // w/ FLUX CAPACITOR

10.5 ARTSRIOT
BURLINGTON, VT

10.6 GRAMERCY THEATRE
NEW YORK, NY

10.7 CLUB XL
HARRISBURG, PA

10.10 COSMIC CHARLIE'S
LEXINGTON, KY // w/ FUNK YOU

10.11 CONCOURSE @ THE INTERNATIONAL
KNOXVILLE, TN // w/ FUNK YOU

10.12 GEORGIA THEATRE
ATHENS, GA // w/ FUNK YOU

10.13 CHARLESTON POUR HOUSE
CHARLESTON, SC // w/ DYNAMO

10.14 CHARLESTON POUR HOUSE
CHARLESTON, SC // w/ JONATHAN SCALES FOURCHESTRA

10.17 SIDETRACKS MUSIC HALL
HUNTSVILLE, AL // w/ FUNK YOU

10.18 TIPITINA'S
NEW ORLEANS, LA // w/ FUNK YOU

10.19 THE SECRET GROUP
HOUSTON, TX // w/ FUNK YOU

10.20 CLUB DADA
DALLAS, TX // w/ FUNK YOU

10.21 GEORGE'S MAJESTIC LOUNGE
FAYETTEVILLE, AR // w/ FUNK YOU

10.24 LAST EXIT LIVE
PHOENIX, AZ // w/ EXMAG

10.25 LODGE ROOM
LOS ANGELES, CA // w/ EXMAG

10.26 THE CATALYST (ATRIUM)
SANTA CRUZ, CA // w/ EXMAG

10.27 CORNERSTONE BERKELEY
BERKELEY, CA // w/ EXMAG

10.31 VOLCANIC THEATRE PUB
BEND, OR // w/ EXMAG

11.1 WILDCRAFT CIDER WORKS
EUGENE, OR // w/ EXMAG

11.2 NECTAR LOUNGE
SEATTLE, WA // w/ EXMAG

11.3 STAR THEATER
PORTLAND, OR // w/ EXMAG

11.6 TOP HAT LOUNGE
MISSOULA, MT // w/ EXMAG

11.7 THE FILLING STATION
BOZEMAN, MT // w/ EXMAG

11.8 THE STATE ROOM
SALT LAKE CITY, UT // w/ EXMAG

11.9 FOX THEATRE
BOULDER, CO // w/ EXMAG

11.10 ULLRS TAVERN
WINTER PARK, CO // w/ EXMAG

11.13 OLD ROCK HOUSE
ST. LOUIS, MO // w/ EXMAG

11.14 THE HI-FI
INDIANAPOLIS, IN // w/ EXMAG

11.15 HEADLINERS MUSIC HALL
LOUISVILLE, KY // w/ EXMAG

11.16 BEACHLAND BALLROOM
CLEVELAND, OH // w/ EXMAG

11.17 BUFFALO IRON WORKS
BUFFALO, NY // w/ EXMAG

1.15-21.19 JAM CRUISE 17

Wake of the Flood

Howlin Rain's creative force explores the collision of science, chance and magic that allowed for his wide-eyed, ragged latest rock LP to exist. *By* **ETHAN MILLER**

"Notes From a Turbulent Plane, Going Higher and Higher"

The captain's voice
a little too low in volume over the PA and clicking with static
said, "Folks, we just can't find any smooth air tonight,
we're not going to have food and beverage service,
the attendants are asked to just stay in their seats
for their own safety and yours."

[goddammit
pushing midnight
flying to the wrong goddamn airport too]

the captain pointed the plane upward and
began to climb the rough dark air
climbing bouncing and wooshing
to try and find calm air
but the captain was right, we couldn't find any
just higher and higher violent air

there weren't many of us on the plane
the cabin was dim and quiet but for the
fat carry-on luggage banging above us in the overhead bins
the bins themselves shook and made quick rumbling sounds
like the low fast roar or old house walls in the jolt of earthquake
the metal and plastics of the seats and rows creaking in unison
throughout the cabin

I smelled something terrible
there was no one sitting around me for three rows in any direction
Four rows up a woman sat with too babies
one or both of the babies was shitting itself madly
I assume inside it's diapers
but the stench was sharp and filled the back of the cabin
as we went full throttle against turbulent air

* * *

How do you talk about a record? It happened quite a while ago. In this case, we made it on the night before, the night of and the night after the 2016 presidential election. So much time has passed since then—shocking world events, tidal wave after tidal wave, earthquake after earthquake of shocks, surprises, unexpected news, joys, sorrow—nothing is the same as Nov. 8, 2016. Yet, here it is, this extraordinary snapshot. Something I love. As time goes on, will I eternally relate to the emotions captured in that moment or will they become exotic and strange to me, the work of a stranger?

The reviews begin to come in. With the really good ones, I imagine the writers to be quite perceptive and smart. The really bad ones I chalk up to lack of taste and low intelligence on the part of the writer. Once in a great while, I see a piece of criticism that actually reflects a strength or flaw in Howlin Rain's expression and I stop to reflect and absorb this observation. Is it a mistake to read these things? Is it a mistake to engage with them? If a really astute critic enlightens you about your own creative work are you smart to absorb that or...?

The cap to the pen I'm using to write this—while drinking a beer, late at night on an airplane flying down the California coast—was full of ink when I opened it and it's going everywhere. I guess this happens due to cabin pressure. It's all over my jeans and hands and moleskin book. The last time this happened to me late at night in an airplane, I was coming back from listening to Howlin Rain demos with Rick Rubin and, after I cleaned as much black ink from off myself as possible, I drew this picture:

Or is letting published criticism alter your course—no matter how astute—the equivalent of time traveling in your life span and effecting events in your life, shifting them from their true course, right or wrong, and creating an imbalance in raw pure artistic trajectory? And furthermore, how do we see our reflection in sound?

Our memories and emotions flow freely, often overflow, unleashed by the aural intake of captured sound and the loose stringing together of abstract words by strangers that we feel almost immediate obsession toward. So many elements of science, chance and something like magic combine for a record to exist that it really is a miracle there are any of them—and baffling that there are so many of them and hundreds more made every day.

* * *

we were so high now
it looked so dark and clear outside
the earth was a distant thing below
lights and the details of civilization all in extreme miniature
the new bits, the freshly built, the bits in ruin, baseball diamonds,
circular fields of agriculture
freeways, hills, shopping malls, cul-de-sacs, big four-lane bridges
over creeks and rivers that looked no bigger than a salamander's vein
from up here at the top of the clear black violent sky

it felt like we were burrowing through invisible rocky soil
faster he went
that's not going to smooth us out dammit
neither is going higher and higher
for christ's sake
we were so high it felt like one of the battering blasts might knock us
right up and out of the atmosphere and we'd fall forever upward
toward neptune
or just into the empty, still dark space

Howlin Rain released their fifth studio album, The Alligator Bride, *on June 8 via Ethan Miller's artist-run Silver Current Records. The group tracked the record over three days with engineer Eric "King Riff" Bauer at San Francisco's the Mansion, playing live to tape and cutting the material in first and second takes.*

WOMAN AT WORK

CAROLINE ROSE

Schizodrift Superstar

CAROLINE ROSE HAS always considered humor to be an important element in her music, and that's particularly true of her sophomore release, *LONER*. The singer's quirky, wit-filled lyrics and catchy songwriting are deeply relatable, mostly because her genuine disposition comes through in every line.

"I wanted to make a record that sounded like my personality," Rose says of her new LP, which dropped in February. "Something that was funny, serious at times, emotional at times, ect." (*LONER*'s press materials note that the album's "lighthearted" topics include "an unfaithful lover, a friend's accidental pregnancy, misogyny, loneliness, death.")

The Long Island-bred, Brooklyn-based musician produced much of the album herself, using trial and error to guide the process. "I learned a lot of things I would probably want to do a bit differently," she adds. "For instance, trying to sonically tie together a bunch of songs written over the course of three years is difficult unless you define the sonic palette and textures ahead of time. So for the next record, I'll probably be more succinct with recording everything in one fell swoop."

Since dropping her Americana-indebted debut *I Will Not Be Afraid* in 2014, Rose has moved on—at least physically—from her Burlington, Vt. home and honed in on a blend of folk, pop, country, dance and surf sounds that she describes as "schizodrift." While the late-twentysomething singer is already writing her next album, her primary focus is touring. She has shows booked around the U.S. and Europe through the fall, including Grace Potter's Grand Point North festival this month. Rose's goal onstage is simply to "create something memorable."

"Given how many bands are out there, and how valuable people's time and money are, I think it's the artist's job to do our best to create our own unique little world when people enter the room, to try and be as much ourselves in the music as possible," Rose says. "For me, designing the stage was important in that regard. It really looks like the inside of my weird brain." She notes, "For people who continue to follow us, you'll hear the live show evolve to incorporate more nuance and texture." ***Emily Zemler***

MAN AT WORK

ICEAGE

Somewhere Between Joy and Despair

On **Iceage**'s fourth LP, *Beyondless*, **Jakob Tvilling Pless**, **Johan Suurballe Wieth**, **Dan Kjær Nielsen** and **Elias Bender Rønnenfelt** have pushed past any preconceptions of what heavy music can sound like, mixing elements of hardcore, Americana and ragtime into something wholly singular. The result is a post post-punk masterwork wherein horn blasts, string lines and piano flourishes mesh with Rønnenfelt's weary, woeful lyrics and literary existentialism. "We try and just follow our gut feeling and immediately act on whatever creative urge might come our way," the frontman says. "The part where you sort of step back and analyze, that comes later on. We don't wanna involve that in the process. And we don't wanna overanalyze ourselves. That would create a stagnant relationship in our own music. It needs to be a mystery, for us at least." Throughout *Beyondless*, there's a conscious meditation on the duality of beauty and ugliness—the sacred and the profane—that runs through songs like the rollicking big band rocker "Painkiller" or the country stomper "Thieves Like Us," which borrows its theme from a quote by the late French novelist Jean Genet's *A Thief's Journal* ("[T]reachery is beautiful if it makes us sing"). "There's both joy and despair in these songs, it's a broad palette," Wieth says. "There certainly is that thing of playing around with taking something ugly and elevating it into something that's quite pretty, and the other way around," adds Rønnenfelt. "Create something that reflects the grey area that is the human mind—ecstasy and longing, desperation and bliss, can exist within the span of a song." ***Justin Joffe***

NICKI BLUHM

After divorcing her husband and musical partner Tim Bluhm and putting her Gramblers on ice, the Bay Area singer starts anew with her solo release, *To Rise You Gotta Fall*.

By **MIKE GREENHAUS**

THE ARC OF DISSOLVE

Everybody has different ways of coping with transition and change—I write. When I started writing, I wasn't aware that it was going to be for this record—it was something I had to do, spiritually and emotionally. I started writing the first song about two years ago at the beginning of a big shift, energetically, in my life—becoming aware that a relationship, a marriage, was on the brink and failing, and just wanting to put my energy into fixing that. So it began with trying to come to terms and understand what was happening in my life and in my relationship.

With everything that I put out, being authentic is the most important thing for me, so these sentiments are true to the period of time when they were written. There was a lot of catharsis in it for me and the songs continued to follow my path up through that shift; things obviously looked different when I wrote the last song right before we went into the studio. It shows the arc of dissolve.

NASHVILLE SKYLINE

I started going to Nashville just over a year ago. The Gramblers are my brothers; I have nothing but love for them and I'm certainly not closing any doors. But I really believe that it's important for everybody to try new things—to be experimental, brave, courageous, play with other people and not get stuck on any one thing. The fear of having a new experience was the same fear of staying in the same place, so I decided to try something new. It was a spontaneous move. I've lived in California my whole life and, when Tim and I divorced, I wanted a fresh start. The Bay Area is small and I needed to spread my wings a little bit—I needed room to start over and to look inward and rediscover who I am. Being married for 10 years during a really important, formative decade of my life left me feeling pretty lost.

The move forced me to go to a place where I didn't have any of that comfort—and I still don't—though I feel a lot better being in Nashville now that I have a band. I physically moved to Nashville, but the journey has been predominantly an inward one—and continues to be—and it will be that way for the rest of my life. This experience has brought me a lot more self-awareness. That's not easy work to do, but it's really important work. Nashville's also a lot more affordable than the Bay Area, which was very appealing to me, and I happened to be there in the spring, which was a really beautiful time. I just pulled the trigger, and a month later, I was moving into my house. Sometimes, if you overthink things, they can hold you back. The best things come from saying, "Yes."

THE WORST PERSON IN THE PLACE

In California, I was writing with friends or partners—people I knew and trusted—or on my own. Nashville is this whole different beast. Suddenly, you were almost going to work. It actually lent to the creativity because I used both sides of my brain. Sometimes I can be a little bit more type A, unfortunately, which is not that conducive to letting go and making music. These songwriting sessions were cool because you went in with an intention.

When you get a good co-writer, who matches with you chemically and your chemistry is on, then it's this really cool union because you're exploring this inner world with somebody else. I found that it was nice to bounce ideas off of people. It feels like a therapy session. You're talking about real life. It starts with a conversation and it's this patient, organic experience. I was fortunate enough to get multiple people who I loved working with and I ended up making lifelong friends.

For me, that was the allure of Nashville—the writing element. I also knew that I wanted to surround myself with people who were ambitious, motivated and inspired me—people who were motivated to be a student of their craft. You can't suck in Nashville; it doesn't fly. And to me, that was inspiring. You always want to be the worst person in the place.

FACETIMING WITH RYAN

Ryan [Adams] and I had known of each other through social media. I was on the road with the Stringdusters when our friendship started to blossom. He had some solo gigs planned, asked me if I knew a bluegrass band and I recommended them. We did two co-writes on my record: "Battlechain Rose" and "Something Really Mean." Working with Ryan was really spontaneous. We were FaceTiming and he was like, "What are you working on?" and I showed him "Battlechain Rose." If you can hook him, that means he's interested, and it's just cool to watch him roll with it.

BAGGAGE CHECK

The album was recorded in Memphis, at Sam Phillips Recording Services with producer Matt Ross-Spang, who is now a dear friend of mine. I was talking with a few people who fell through, but finding Matt was fate. We met up while I was on a songwriting trip to Nashville to see if we jived. Matt has this understated confidence. I trusted him right away. I can't explain it; he has a good energy about him, and he puts his head down and works. You meet a lot of people in the industry who start recording at 4 p.m. and work until the morning, which is what I was used to. His professionalism was a breath of fresh air. I'm somebody who likes to sleep, so all the puzzle pieces aligned and he got the right people in the room.

The only baggage that I wanted to carry into making this record was the words that I was saying. When you know people so well and you've been with them for so long, you know how they're gonna respond, or else you project. I wanted a clean slate—a safe place—because the songs were so vulnerable. I didn't want anyone I was working with to know my story; I wanted them to hear the songs without knowing their backstory. It was a great move because I was able to let go without judgment or anxiety. It was the freest I had felt in a long time.

I tend to listen to the same records, which I don't think is the best thing—music for me is very comforting. Sonically, Matt was a huge contributor to the way that the sounds blossomed, so it was really great having him in that leadership role.

TOUR DIARY
By Devon Allman

THE YEAR WAS 1989. AFTER A BRUTAL NEAR-DECADE apart, the Allman Brothers Band celebrated their 20th anniversary with a four-LP greatest hits collection. The box set also paved the way for my dad [Gregg Allman], Dickey Betts, Jaimoe and Butch Trucks to get the band back together and get back on the bus. I opted out of my senior year of high school to experience their reunion tour.

I was 17 years old and the horseshit curriculum at my local high school had me at my wit's end. I knew I would learn way more about music and the music business being on a bus with my dad and his band than I ever would in that school. I quit and, later that same night, I boarded a flight for New York *Fucking* City! New York already had a huge place in my heart since I grew up seeing the city on *SNL* and through various parades. On the first leg of the tour, I got on the bus and there was this 12-year-old kid. He just looked like a little badass. He had a Sony Walkman on and was bobbin' his head to a groove. I said, "Hey, man! Whatcha listening to?" He responded with one word: "Testament." I grew up in South Texas, where thrash metal was king, so this was a very good thing, and the kid was instantly hip in my eyes.

That kid was Duane Betts, and we forged a friendship on that tour that continues to this day. Years go by, you and grow up, you tour the world in your own band—maybe you get married, have a child, life happens. But now, Duane and I have the tour bus. We have our own records out and, in 2018, we decided to join forces and play our music, some of our dads' music and some of our heroes' music all over the world. The road does indeed go on forever.

It's been a challenge trying to play at least one cut off every record of mine. The encores have been really cookin' lately. It's amazing to see the smiles on the faces when they hear a familiar tune from the family.

Me, Duane Betts, Johnny Stachela at Picasso's, a super-cool coffee shop in my hometown of St. Charles, Mo. on a break from rehearsals.

On the bus with these savages—John Lum, Jackson, Stokes, DA, Johnny Stachela, Duane Betts. We usually sip cold beers and talk about the show, watch movies, jam cassettes—analog, baby!

I got to play Duane Allman's 1957 Gold Top Les Paul when I was in Macon, Ga. It's such an amazing instrument, dripping with mojo.

Michelle Wilson (Devon Allman with Duane's Gold Top)

It's been such an amazing time playing music with Duane. His guitar style just blows my mind—you never know where he's going to take it. I'm learning a lot.

With the bigger tour, I've had the luxury of bringing about 8-10 guitars with me. This custom Tele in copper is a fucking savage.

Jackson Stokes and I soaking up some sun in Vegas.

So here's a peek into what's next for us. We are writing an album together. I hope to cut it in the fall, and lay it on y'all at the beginning of next year.

What an awesome time seeing these two trading licks. Seeing Dickey back at it has warmed my heart and made me really miss my dad.

Me and "Indy" (Nicholas David) in some airport at some ungodly bullshit hour.

Michelle Wilson (Devon Allman and Duane Betts); Monty Jay (Devon Allman and his Tele in copper); Monty Jay (Duane and Dickey Betts)

NEIL & LIAM FINN

On the eve of his first tour as Fleetwood Mac's newly anointed singer/guitarist, Crowded House's frontman turns his attention toward his family band.

By **LARSON SUTTON**

THOUGH THE FINNS—father Neil and son Liam—have performed together before, notably in Neil's band Crowded House, their new joint LP *Lightsleeper* marks the first time that they've truly collaborated for an entire album. The record is stocked with Finn trademarks: rich, evocative melodies, complex, yet accessible arrangements, lush strings and detailed instrumentation. It also features Mick Fleetwood on a few tracks, a guest appearance that led directly to Neil's new post as Fleetwood Mac's guitarist and singer.

While at Neil's home in New Zealand, the Finns took some time away from their myriad of projects to discuss the record's conceptual premise, geographically challenging collaborative process and their "memories of cabbage."

Making an album can be contentious in the best of circumstances. And sometimes that contention, in fact, brings out the best work. As a father and son working together, did you set any ground rules before you started?

LIAM: There's never been a spoken rule, but we've played together since I was very small. I first played in dad's band when I was about 14 and learned very quickly of the unspoken code that when you're rehearsing, things can get very blunt and direct. There's no time for niceties. You've got to achieve what you want, especially when you're telling someone how to play something or how you want it to sound. But writing together and making a record together was a lot bigger than that.

We went quite a long time before we ever wrote songs together. It took an amount of time for us to come at it from where there was a lot of mutual respect and awareness—and self-awareness—on how to deal with it. Like you said, there's worthwhile drama in making music. We didn't want it to be really easy and smooth, and it wasn't. It was a good learning experience, but it still had its trials and tribulations.

NEIL: Because we're working together, in a way, we encouraged each other to be more indulgent. A song like [the expansive] "Where's My Room" was allowed to grow. We got giddy about how much further it could go. We wanted to give the album room to become something magnificent.

When you were writing, was there an intention to find ways to spin into each other's musical orbits?

LIAM: We went into it with no preconception of what we would sound like. We wanted that to come out naturally through jamming and mucking around. Some of it was with my brother, Elroy, and mum, Sharon. Songs like "Meet Me in the Air" were spawned from seeing what we would sound like as a family band. Those moments were really exciting and kind of the glue of the record. Other times, there were certain things dad does—styles, types of songs he's written—that I really love. I was totally encouraging him and vice versa.

If we are considering orbits, there are corners of the orbits that seemed like a good place to have a holiday. I'd go into dad's and say, "Let's hang out here for a while." He'd come into mine and say, "I've always liked this part of your orbit." In a way, it was like producing each other.

NEIL: There was such a long process involved because we weren't in the same city for large chunks of time. We'd come together in patches and then we'd go away and work separately on it. What was the most common thing on songs we wrote together, anyway, was that we would jam. We ended up with tracks that were very atmospheric. We found a sort of sultry, loungey, dreamy soundscape that we kept enjoying.

Liam would go in on an evening, when everyone had gone to bed, and try a vocal idea over that. I'd go in the morning and try some vocal ideas over the same song, or maybe another jam. We would compare notes at the end of the day. Sometimes independently, occasionally together, we were keeping the song in a dreamy state of exploration as long as we possibly could, so the ideas that emerged were instinctive. We didn't intellectualize it until afterward when we were examining how to structure it or finish it.

How was finishing it different from creating it?

LIAM: Finishing things is always, for me, the hardest part of the process—how to hand it off to [be mixed] was something we learned about in stages. The first time we started getting mixes back, we quickly realized how maybe we weren't quite ready for them to be mixed. We wanted to make sure what we were handing off was what we heard it in our heads.

NEIL: Sometimes it feels like a maddening process. You can go crazy. It can seem obsessive and tinged with the possibility of disaster because you can lose perspective. I'm devoted to that mentality and I think Liam is as well.

We had Tchad [Blake] mixing in Wales. Liam was in LA. I was in Auckland. Sometimes, two days went by between a mix coming back and us being able to respond.

How did your geographic limitations impact your overall recording approach?

NEIL: If we had been in a room for three months together every day, then that could've been great as well. It is what

Continued on page 77

CURSE OF LONO
AS I FELL
THE NEW ALBUM
OUT AUGUST 17TH
FEATURING THE SINGLES VALENTINE
AND TELL ME ABOUT YOUR LOVE
curseoflonoband.com / @curseoflonoband
SUBMARINE CAT
RECORDS

GUYUTES
730 NW 23RD ST
OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73103
PHONE:405-702-6960
WWW.GUYUTES.COM
ELEVATED STREET FOOD
I AM HAPPY
OPEN AIR PATIO BAR
FULL MENU SERVED UNTIL 1:30AM

PRESENTING THE RELIX

Welcome to the Relix 44. To commemorate the past 44 years of our existence, we've created this list of people, places and things that inspire us today.

Charles Lloyd

D. Darr (Lloyd)

Genre-Bending, Bucket-list Must: **Charles Lloyd**

None of Charles Lloyd's groundbreaking experiments over the past six decades—his fusions of jazz, rock and Eastern elements—have been consciously designed. And that same primal "intuition" led to the 80-year-old saxophonist's latest album, *Vanished Gardens*, a collaboration with roots-rock artist Lucinda Williams. "A friend turned me on to [Williams' song] 'Car Wheels on a Gravel Road' when it came out 20 years ago, and I always remembered it," he says, recalling his path to meeting the singer-songwriter. "I later came to find that there was a link with [guitarist Bill Frisell] and [pedal-steel guitarist Greg Leisz]. There are some things that can't be explained with words. I am not a word master like Lucinda, so my explanation has to be heard in the music. There is an unusual meeting here between song and sound. We all want to see where it leads us."

The union was solidified in April 2017, when Williams joined Lloyd and his backing band, the Marvels, during an exhilarating show at UCLA's Royce Hall. That immediate chemistry spilled over into a run of LA recording sessions, which blurred the lines between country, jazz, folk and rock. "There was not a lot of discussion before each take," Lloyd says of the creative process, detailing how the band reworked several of Williams' songs from the ground up. "I like fresh impressions. The Marvels went over the songs before Lu arrived in the studio, so we were developing our imprint on the material. When [co-producer] Don Was heard us, he said, 'Let's bring her into your sandbox.' It was an organic process." But Lloyd is adamant that he and Williams never envisioned *Vanished Gardens* as some kind of "jazz- meets-country concept album" cooked up by a record label. Instead, it was a natural extension of the genre-less mindset he cultivated as a young artist.

"It came together organically for the love of music," he says of the LP. "And when you love music, you love a lot of it. Coming out of the '60s, I always loved the way FM radio broke down barriers between genres of music by playing all of it. During one playlist, you could hear my music, followed by Ravi Shankar, followed by Dylan or Hendrix or The Band. What Lu and I have done feels unprecedented. I am not trying to make her a jazz singer, and she is not trying to convert me to her world. But we swim together in the same river knowing that, eventually, it all empties out into the same ocean of sound." ***Ryan Reed***

Music Discovery Starts Here: **Binky Griptite**

"When somebody finally turns over their TV talk show to me, then The Dap-Kings will be my house band," laughs guitarist Binky Griptite, joking about the future of the Brooklyn-based retro-soul outfit that he played with for two decades. It's a topic he's been asked to address countless times since the passing of the group's inimitable vocalist, Sharon Jones, in the fall of 2016 after a lengthy battle with cancer.

"It's obviously sidelined The Dap-Kings for a bit because we had to honor and respect her absence and regroup, figure out our next steps forward," says Griptite, who announced in July that he plans to leave the group this fall to focus on other projects. "All of us have been exploring other things. For me, that means finally taking that step to being an actual radio DJ."

Griptite's new gig, a radio show on New York's WFUV called *The Boogie Down*, started when the station's Program Director Rita Houston welcomed The Dap-Kings for an on-air remembrance of Jones, after which Griptite asked Houston if there were any DJ spots open. The guitarist was in luck, and *The Boogie Down* has now been on the air for over a year, holding down the 8–11 p.m. spot on Saturday nights with what Griptite calls "an all-vinyl, predominantly funk and soul show."

"I've done a little bit of DJing in the past—bar gigs here and there," Griptite says. "But ever since I was in high school, I've had people telling me: 'I love your voice; you should be a [radio] DJ.' So it's always been in the back of my head but, obviously, my career as a musician was the priority."

The Boogie Down lets Griptite explore the funk and soul roots that shined through so prominently in his work with The Dap-Kings, along with his love of vinyl—both classic and contemporary. "As long as it feels soulful, if it's got a rhythm, that'll make you wanna move and feel some energy. I'll play it—and it is decidedly all-vinyl," Griptite explains. "I'm really dedicated to not only playing old vinyl, but new records too. I want to support bands and labels that are still making vinyl records. It's not like I don't listen to an iPod at home—I do. I mean, if I'm on a plane, I don't have a turntable. But for me, vinyl's just a different experience."

In addition to scratching that DJ itch, Griptite also has a new musical outlet, The Binky Griptite Orchestra, a collective that focuses on Griptite's newfound love of 1940s rhythm and blues. "At times in the past, I've had another soul band on the side, but it seemed redundant to me, since I was already in The Dap-Kings," Griptite says. "I've always loved the blues, and I like jazz as well, and R&B is sort of the bridge between blues and jazz. The chord progressions are a bit more involved than 1-4-5, a little deeper than Chicago blues, but then it's not full-on like *Giant Steps* or something. And it's still something that people can dance to. The best thing about doing shows with Sharon and The Dap-Kings is playing for people who are dancing."

And while The Dap-Kings don't have any immediate plans to record or tour by themselves—though they've played select dates with Jon Batiste this year, along with serving as the house band for a star-studded Otis Redding tribute at New York's Apollo Theater—Griptite says the group is open to playing with whomever might need their services, and there will eventually be more music from the Kings.

"We've talked about it," Griptite said, before posting on social media that he planed to step away from the band. "In Sharon's last days, she said she wanted us to continue. I meet fans in the streets, and everybody wants to know what's next—if we'll use another singer. To that, I'd say the answer is: 'highly unlikely.' As far as our whole agenda, at some point, we'll probably do an instrumental record, maybe Booker T. & the MG's-style. Mostly, we just take life as it comes. Everyone is doing their own thing and is in demand, but we miss each other and the music, and all the things that go with it. We have high standards, and we have fans that appreciate that, so we have to keep our quality level to what people expect. We're looking to continue to expand on the legacy of the work that we've done and put more good music out into the world." ***Matt Inman***

Binky Griptite

Radio at Breakneck Speed: ***Live from Here***

During the fall of 2014, while on tour with Edgar Meyer, Chris Thile received a call from creator and host Garrison Keillor. "He left a voice mail and at first I figured he wanted me to be on the show. Occasionally he'd call me himself and ask, 'Hey can you come down and be in the band this week?' So I called him back and then out of the clear blue sky with absolutely no ramp-up he said, 'I think I'm coming in for a landing as far as *A Prairie Home Companion* is concerned and I think you should be the next host.'"

While Thile was in the midst of an active touring and recording schedule with Punch Brothers, Meyer, solo gigs and other projects (Nickel Creek reunited in 2014), he reveals, "It was a fairly easy yes since I've been a fan of the show since birth. Quite literally my parents listened every week from the time I was born, which was shortly after the

show went national. It was a huge part of my concept of audible art and entertainment. The importance of that time on Saturdays to commune anonymously with your fellow man in the company of good music and humor was impressed deeply onto my being. So the idea of being the next steward of that was really attractive."

Now known as *Live From Here*, the program airs on over 550 stations and reaches in excess of 2.5 million listeners each week. After Keillor first contacted him, Thile put in a couple of stints as guest host and spent quite a bit of time considering how he might best serve the format. By the time he debuted on October 15, 2016, "It was clear that it would become more music centered. I remember getting off the phone that first time and making a gigantic list of the people I would ask to be on it. Then I started writing down ideas, the first of which was writing a song every week, which we've been able to do. Other ideas only just now came to fruition like, 'Wouldn't it be amazing to broadcast live from the Telluride Bluegrass Festival?' I also had the idea of expanding the textural palette of the show to the four corners of the earth so that eventually it wouldn't be a roots music haven but an oasis in which everything under the sun could be heard."

While stories from Lake Wobegon are no longer part of the broadcast, Thile has ramped up the program's approach to humor. "The idea to incorporate stand-up comedians was actually Garrison's but it resonated with me having cut my teeth at Café Largo in Los Angeles, which is basically a music and comedy club. The owner and guru Mark Flanagan will say, 'Hey, what if Nick Kroll opens for you?' and it's invariably a gas and that's how I met Tom Papa who has been *our* comedy guru. He opened one of my solo shows and I was on the side of the stage laughing my ass off and deeply feeling the power of music and comedy."

Thile's collaborators also include his wife, actress Claire Coffee, who recently wrapped up a six season run on the television series *Grimm* ("This year she decided to give it a go for us and the nice thing is I don't know anything about that world so there's no potential for husband-wife creative head-butting") as well as Joey Ryan, from The Milk Carton Kids. ("He's a great musician and so funny—he was someone I tapped fairly early on as someone who could blend the show's music and humor into a cohesive whole.") Beyond this he credits the entire *Live From Here* team, noting, "Everyone is so pro, which was never on greater display then at Telluride Bluegrass Festival this year, when we were live. But it happens every week, enabling us to propel you though two hours at a breakneck speed—you won't know where the time went." ***Dean Budnick***

Chris Thile

The Caverns

All for One: **Tash Sultana**

Although Tash Sultana is only 23 years old, her debut album has been a long time coming. She was just three years old when her grandfather first gave her a guitar and, by the time she was in high school, she was deploying fake IDs in order to get through doors and appear at open mic nights in Melbourne, Australia. She also began busking on the streets of the city, testing out her original songs. Sultana later took to YouTube, recording a series of her compositions at home in her bedroom, with her 2016 performance of "Jungle" receiving over 20 million views.

Sultana is an explosive guitar player, who not only identifies Jimi Hendrix as an inspiration but also names Fleetwood Mac and Erykah Badu as part of her pantheon. She's a true solo act who makes prodigious use of looping technology to build her sound, with well over a dozen pedals at her command in the live setting. She explains, "I started getting RSI (Repetitive strain injury) in my wrists and my elbow from playing really hard, so I started looping. I feel like looping is such a massive part of my music and live show experience right now. It's something that isn't always going to define my live set, I'm open to doing something different but for now it's just me."

Her fan base is particularly fervid. In 2017, Sultana sold out every date on her first U.S. tour, despite never previously having visited the country. She credits her supporters for this achievement, describing them as "crazy (in a good way)," and adds, "I think they're a massive part of my music reaching so many different parts of the world. That tour was insane, I couldn't believe all these people loved my music and knew all the words when I'd never been there before." She will return to North America in November to build on the new audience she amassed through her dynamic sets at Bonnaroo, Coachella and Governors Ball.

As for her studio record for Mom + Pop Music, *Flow State*, Sultana discloses, that in listening back to her debut, *Notion EP*, she now recognizes that "Big Smoke (Live)" "wasn't really a song, it was just something I used to jam when I was busking. *Flow State* is all proper songs, some that I've been working on for years and it's taken all that time to get them right and make them real songs. Others I wrote while in the studio. If you asked me a year ago I would have told you I thought I knew my sound, but now I'm realizing that I don't know everything about it and there's still heaps for me to learn and that's influenced how I write songs in the studio now. I'm just trying to learn as much as I can off others and hone my craft." ***Dean Budnick***

Shine a Light: ***Bluegrass Underground*** **at The Caverns**

"It was Memorial Day of 2008, and I walked into a cave one man and I came out another," *Bluegrass Underground* creator Todd Mayo explains. Mayo was born and raised in Tennessee, which is said to have the largest number of explorable caves in the Unites States. ("People say, 'Where are you from?' and I tell them: 'I was born in the West, schooled in the East and I live in the middle.' That's not California, New York and Kansas—That's Memphis, Knoxville and Nashville!") However, he had never set foot in a cave until May 2008 and it only happened because he had failed to reserve a pontoon boat in advance during a family vacation, so he opted to visit Cumberland Caverns.

Mayo, who works in advertising, was a music fan, not an industry professional; however, he had an epiphany when he reached The Caverns' Volcano Room. As he recalls, "I looked at the tour guide and I asked, 'Do ya'll have live music down here?' She said, 'No, but that'd be a good idea' and I said, 'Man, I'm gonna call your general manager.' It honestly was one of those ideas that hit spontaneously. That night I said, 'I'm gonna call it *Bluegrass Underground* and I immediately started working to put something together.

It's pretty crazy to look back on it because seven weeks later, we had our first Bluegrass Underground with Chris Stapleton and the Steeldrivers and it was on WSM radio, home of the Grand Ole Opry. In the very first six months, we had the Infamous Stringdusters, Tim O'Brien with Dennis Crouch, Stuart Duncan and the Grascals. We had the Silver Jews do their last show ever in a cave, which definitely put the *underground* into *Bluegrass Underground*."

Mayo formed a production company, Todd Squared, with Todd Jarrell, who originally had come down to interview him for NPR and, within a couple years, they landed the program on PBS.

This past spring *Bluegrass Underground* moved to a new location in Pelham, Tenn., which they've simply dubbed The Caverns. As Mayo explains, "The cave where we did the show is a very special place but, as a music venue, we were pushing a round peg in a square hole because their core business was never music; it was tours and Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and all that. So we were never able to put permanent power or sound in there. It was really hard to get to. It was cool, but it wasn't

Tash Sultana

Michael Weintrob (The Caverns), Alec Gowan (Sultana)

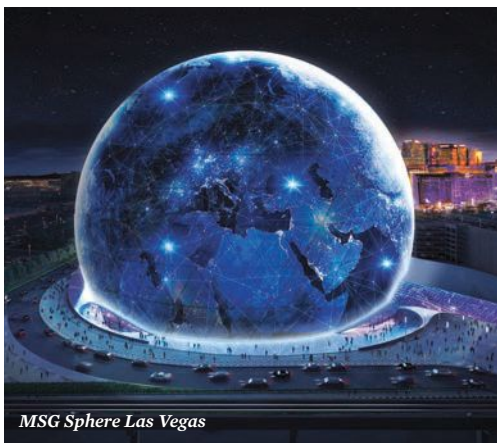
the ideal cave for music. I've been searching for something that could be more ideally suited for the long haul for years." This new location is featured on the eighth season of the PBS show, which kicked off with a special performance by Brandi Carlile.

"When asked to identify his favorite sets over the past decade, the longstanding Spreadhead names Widespread Panic and then adds, "At that very first show with Chris Stapleton and the Steeldrivers, I said to Todd Jarrell, 'It will never get better than it has today, but we're gonna have a lot of fun trying.' That band and that time was truly epic. But right now, I also feel the same way about Billy Strings as I did about the Steeldrivers in 2008.

We've got another show coming up that I'm really looking forward to—Scott Miller and John Moreland. I can't think of two better songwriters that people don't know that they ought to listen to. That's what I love about what we do: We can bring all sorts of people together from all backgrounds to see the music, and it's a musical adventure about shining a light into the darkness on artists that need to be discovered."
Dean Budnick

Round Trip: **MSG Sphere Las Vegas**

While The Caverns is a performance space created inside a dazzling natural formation, we're equally excited about a future venue that will offer another form of spectacle. The MSG Sphere Las Vegas will be over 360-feet high and 500-feet wide. The one-of-a-kind facility, which—in its largest configuration—will be able to seat over 18,000 concertgoers, will incorporate a dynamically adaptive acoustic system that pledges to utilize "a variety of technologies, including beam-forming, enabling audio to be directed to specific locations in the bowl at a near constant volume from point of origin to destination." The facility also will include a haptic flooring system, allowing audiences to feel the bass and fully experience any given show. The MSG Sphere Las Vegas also will offer a feast for the eyes by incorporating the largest and highest-resolution LED screen on Earth: a 170,000-square-foot display. We're ready to clear our schedules in anticipation of the projected late-2020 opening, and here's hoping for a performance slate that will include one of our favorite bands that has been able to attain new creative heights in the current MSG. ***Dean Budnick***



MSG Sphere Las Vegas

Never Miss a Wednesday Show: **The Benevento-Russo Duo with Mike Gordon's 52-minute Version of "Foam"**

Before drummer Joe Russo and keyboard player Marco Benevento joined forces in Joe Russo's Almost Dead (and also prior to their previous efforts as half of Bustle in Your Hedgerow), the pair toured and recorded steadily as the Benevento-Russo Duo. From 2001-2009, The Duo, as they were commonly known, garnered notoriety for their ambitious live performances and complex yet engaging original compositions. The pair also struck up a musical relationship with Phish bassist Mike Gordon and the three musicians performed infrequent gigs together. On Wednesday, April 27, 2005 they found themselves at the Georgia Theatre in Athens where they delivered a first set that consisted solely of an expansive version of the Phish original,

the Magpie Salute
HIGH WATER I
SWAGGERING ROCK 'N' ROLL,
PSYCHEDELIC BLUES, AND
CAMPFIRE-WORTHY STORYTELLING.
THE DEBUT STUDIO ALBUM FROM THE MAGPIE SALUTE!
Featuring "Send Me An Omen", "For The Wind", "Sister Moon"
and 9 more originals from former members of The Black Crowes!
CD, 2LP & DIGITALLY ALL AVAILABLE NOW!
eagle records
UNIVERSAL
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP
themagpiesalute.com
eagle-rock.com
Madison Square Garden

"Foam." You can visit livephish.com to listen to the song itself in all 52 minutes of its glory. Here's what Benevento has to say looking back on that performance:

The amazing thing about that particular tour was that it was literally just the three of us. No tour manager, no sound guy, no crew, no nothing! And the car we rented was a convertible. So, Mike, Joe and I were driving around Athens with the top down just being freaks! I'm sure Mike has a video of that somewhere! We were trying to tell people about the show and trying to talk to cute girls. When we finally went to the gig, the room was half full at best—we were surprised, and kinda pissed, that not many people came out. All of the other shows had packed houses, but this particular one people just slacked on. We had been playing a wide variety of tunes on that tour, one of them being "Foam." In the green room Mike said to Joe and I, 'What if we just played 'Foam' for the entire first set? We'll totally deconstruct it, extend parts and play melodies that cue the next sections and totally freak the crowd out and, that way, people will know never to slack on a Mike and the Italians show! Our eyes lit up and we both said, 'Yes!'" ***Dean Budnick***

Poetry in Motion: **The Rotating Drummers on *Late Night with Seth Meyers***

Ever since it launched in early 2014, NBC's *Late Night with Seth Meyers* has distinguished itself thanks to the bite of its political humor and the range of its guest bookings (novelists!). Yet beyond these triumphs, the program excels in another realm altogether: its commitment to an array of world class drummers. Each week, the 8G Band welcomes yet another gifted player to set up their kit and drive the sound. The list includes: Vinnie Colaiuta, Chad Smith, Abe Laboriel Jr., Hannah Welton, Matt Cameron, Patrick Carney, Kenny Aronoff, Matt Sorum, Jimmy Chamberlin,Brad Wilk, Stanton Moore and Joe Russo.

The Slip

Eric Leiderman—one of the show's producers—is a former professional drummer himself who, while touring with Pearl, opened the Velvet Revolver's final dates in the U.K. He's the one who came up with the idea of the rotating drummers and he's also the person who extends the weekly invitation for newcomers to join *Late Night* bandleader Fred Armisen and his group. The idea came together because Armisen, who originally was going to play guitar on *Late Night* before he switched to drums, experienced recurring scheduling conflicts due to his work on shows such as *Portlandia* and *Documentary Now!* Leiderman explains, "One day it just occurred to me that we had this amazing opportunity. I knew some of the best drummers in the world and those that I didn't know personally, we could contact. So I pitched it to Fred and from the very start he's been on board and supportive."

It's not just a matter of a drummer coming in and contributing fills. The musician must also understand the subtleties and logistics of working on television. Beyond this though, Leiderman notes, "From the beginning Fred and I agreed that we wanted a vibe that's like a hang, and we wanted to focus on original tunes, not covers."

This means that every Monday morning the week's drummer arrives on set, works with the show's tech to adjust the kit and then goes off to write music with the band. This precedes a studio rehearsal and then a taping, all of which occurs four days a week and begins anew each Monday. It certainly adds some complexity for the 8G Band members, who must remain nimble and open-minded, however the results warrant the effort. There is a certain segment of *Late Night with Seth Meyers* viewers, who eagerly anticipate the announcement of the next week's drummer.

"It's just another layer we add to the parfait that makes the show more interesting," Leiderman contends. "To have the band deal with a different heartbeat every week was a lot to ask at first because there is that pressure. But at the end of the day, now they look forward to the challenge. It's an adventure every week but it's also something that I'm grateful for. I'm just a big, nerdy rock fan who loves television, music and drums." ***Dean Budnick***

Justin Vernon's Type of PEOPLE: **The Slip**

When *Relix*'s sister site Jambands.com launched 20 years ago this month, there was little question which band should be awarded the inaugural "artist to watch" nod: The Slip. Something about the New England-bred trio has always inspired musicians and fans from both sides of the hippie-hipster aisle to root for The Slip with apostle-like fervor, as guitarist Brad Barr, his brother and drummer Andrew and bassist Marc Friedman have carved out a highly improvisational scene uniquely their own.

The Slip formed as a classic-rock leaning cover band working the prep-school circuit at Marion, Mass.'s Tabor Academy in 1989 before any of the group's core members were actually part of the project. The Barrs and Friedman gradually joined and, after graduating, all enrolled at the prestigious Berklee College of Music. The Slip's early sound, as exemplified by their fabled "Red House" jam sessions and debut *From the Gecko*, tilted toward the acid-jazz and freeform side of the then-burgeoning jamband genre. But they eventually expanded their palette to include heavy post-rock, American primitive folk, wooly roots music, minimalist atmospherics and the world-informed beats that Andrew studied when the Barrs' father traded a Malian musician free dental care in exchange for percussion lessons.

By the time The Slip reached their broadest audience with 2006's *Eisenhower*, the indie revolution was in full swing and the trio came to personify the post-jam era, treating conventional alt-rock structures like Fabergé eggs containing their kaleidoscopic pockets of sound. Yet just as The Slip seemed to have finally crossed into mainstream popular culture, thanks to a late-night appearance, a key TV placement and a *Guitar Hero* nod, they shifted their attention elsewhere.

Along the way, they touched the defining voices of several generations, signing with Butch Trucks' Flying Frog label, recording in Phish's Barn clubhouse, backing Sonya Kitchell, opening for My Morning Jacket on tour, lending their rhythm section to Natalie Merchant and inspiring everyone from Marco Benevento to Bon Iver's Justin Vernon to think differently, musically. "I got *very* into The Slip in high school," says Vernon, who worked with Andrew Barr on a Land of Talk album and recruited the Barrs for his highly collaborative European P E O P L E happening in August. "I saw them many times. I was into *jam* stuff, but they were somehow also doing a group improvisation thing that nobody else on that circuit was. There was a deeper understanding. 'Mr. Meowskers' is one of my all-time favorite drum beats. Heroes."

The Slip quietly went on hiatus in 2012, briefly emerging for a set at Quincy, Calif.'s High Sierra in 2015 and a single-song appearance at the same festival this past summer. However, the trio remains the festival generation's Big Star, turning heads with the trail of albums and live recordings they left behind.
Mike Greenhaus

Mike and the Italians reunite at Hulaween 2017

Eric Leiderman and Abe Laboriel Jr.

Dave Vann (Benevento, Gordon Russo), Lloyd Bishop @NBC (Leiderman and Laboriel Jr.)

Angélique Kidjo

Danny Clinch

Once in a Lifetime: **Angélique Kidjo's *Remain in Light***

Remain in Light is so relevant in this time that we live in, which is why I decided to record it myself. We should remember that whatever happens around us in the world or in our lives, if we hang on to this light and we remain in this light, then things can move forward and we can find solutions. We cannot allow darkness to shadow our light. So, for me, it's a message to everyone in the world that we are here to live one life and we must live it to the fullest. Music helps us do that. That's why this album means so much to me: to bring people together, the fans of the Talking Heads, all around the world. Talking Heads are a rock-and-roll band that make you question the verity of rock-and-roll that exists. When you talk about rock-and-roll most of the time, we think about The Rolling Stones and The Beatles, but the thing about the Talking Heads is that they can take rock-and-roll out of its comfort zone and go somewhere else. *Remain in Light*, for me, brings rock-and-roll and Africa together. I listen to the album and feel so close to it. In 1992, the first American artist to come and support the artists that came from Africa was David Byrne, and it was really impressive for me to meet him. He came to see me after the show and told me how much he liked my album. We developed a relationship later when I moved to America in 1997. He welcomed me to New York and invited me to his place, and I did a lot of stuff with David impromptu. At one of my shows, I invited him to come and sing on one of my songs. He grabbed a guitar, we rehearsed for two minutes in the dressing room and *boom*, we did it. That's the type of artist he is. When he likes something, he's not one to speak a lot; he has to prove it, and he has to do it. ***Angélique Kidjo***

Brooklyn's Burning Man: **House of Yes**

"We always like to infuse our funkiness into the show," says Justin Ahiyon, general manager for Brooklyn's House of Yes, a self-described "performance-fueled nightclub" that has been creating a growing buzz around its over-the-top entertainment offerings, which include dance parties, burlesque shows, aerial acrobatics and more—plus some live music that gets integrated into the mix to round out the immersive experience.

"When bands come to play, I try to convince them to let us co-create with them and make it a special experience, as opposed to just playing a venue where there's an opener and a headliner," Ahiyon says after noting that fellow Brooklynites Turkuaz shot a music video at the nightclub in 2017. "We went full-on House of Yes—people in costumes, choreographed dances with glitter, and balloon drops and confetti cannons."

House of Yes, now in its third location, started in 2007 when founders Anya Sapozhnikova and Kae Burke transformed a second-floor loft into a thriving creative hub. Less than a year later, a fire forced them to seek a new location in East Williamsburg, where House of Yes flourished for five years before rising rents led to a second move. That's when Ahiyon and his cousin, Ilan Telmont, conspired with Sapozhnikova and Burke, whom they'd met through the Brooklyn art and performance scene, to bring House of Yes back to life in Bushwick, where it currently resides.

HOMETOWN
GET DOWN
MUSIC FESTIVAL
SEPTEMBER 21ST - 22ND 2018
WITH PERFORMANCES BY
CRIS JACOBS BAND
THE DIRTY GRASS PLAYERS STEAL YOUR PEACH BUMPIN' UGLIES
19TH STREET BAND JAH WORKS SERENE GREEN REVELATOR HILL
THE PLATE SCRAPERS DELIRIOUS GEORGE MINDY MILLER & THE CHROME TEARS
GORDON STERLING & THE PEOPLE STAYCATION SUGAGRITS MINDY MILLER
RAY WROTEN OMAR TEITELBAUM CHRIS COMPTON GORDON STERLING LAUREN CALVE
LINDSAY HOUGH LYDIA MARTIN STEFAN EDWARDS PETE GOODWIN MIKE CANDELA
A CHARITY EVENT
www.HOMETOWNGETDOWN.org | CLARKSBURG, MD

House of Yes

Patrick Hallahan in action at One Big Holiday

"I had been going to Burning Man for 10 years already with [Ilan], and we got really inspired there, learning about dressing in costumes and dancing—and the freedom," Ahiyon says. "And every year, we'd come back to New York and there was really be no place to go to keep that energy alive."

Ahiyon was no stranger to House of Yes, though—he played both of House of Yes' previous locations, including with Consider the Source, the instrumental fusion trio he co-founded in 2004 and played with until 2012 when he decided to give up the touring life to work in hospitality. Ahiyon still maintains a strong relationship with the group, who will be playing their album-release party at House of Yes this month. He also plans to get back into performing now that the current House of Yes location has momentum, and he will sometimes play drums alongside the various DJs that pass through the club.

But the real goal for the future is taking the dance party on the road, an endeavor that got off to a promising start at Tennessee's Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival this past June, where House of Yes brought a Brooklyn nightclub vibe to The Farm.

"We basically airdropped the House of Yes into the festival," Ahiyon says proudly, adding that he and his partners plan to hit more festivals and more cities in the coming years. "We wanted to bring everything we do—the full-on nightclub experience. The whole idea about our dance party is that you're in a theater, but without seats. You come in and you're in a club, but there's theater going on all around you—above your head, in front of you, behind you, on the side.

"It was a smashing success, and the response was incredible," Ahiyon says. "We're already signed up to go back next year—even bigger."

Matt Inman

DMB Keyman: **Buddy Strong**

Buddy Strong celebrated his birthday by indulging in the "purest form of musical cocaine": a sprawling, 22-minute version of Dave Matthews Band's "Two Step" at a show in Indiana. But it was nearly a nightmare trip. The keyboardist—who'd only joined the group's summer tour just over a month before—dutifully navigated the *Crash* epic's brooding marches and funky grooves, right up until the natural end point of the album arrangement. Then, he realized his new bandmates had veered off into their now-standard mutated jam, leaving him frantically playing catch-up.

"I was oblivious," he admits. "I was driving with my eyes closed." But the sheer thrill of learning on the fly, of living in the moment, is why this gig made him "the happiest I've been about music in a long, long time." He continues, "That was the best night I've had with this band. [Drummer Carter Beauford] started playing, and I couldn't believe it. It's like we'd released the beast."

DMB recruited Strong after parting ways with their longtime violinist Boyd Tinsley and realizing they needed another instrument to fill out the live sound. Though they'd collaborated with other keyboardists in the past—most notably early member Peter Griesar and longtime touring associate Butch Taylor—they sought out a new creative flavor in Strong, who built his resumé in gospel, hip-hop and R&B. The connection was DMB trumpeter/horn arranger Rashawn Ross, with whom Strong shared a mutual friend in Usher guitarist Johnny "Natural" Najera. Strong almost joined the lineup two years ago, when the band toyed with the idea of bringing back keyboards, but Tinsley's absence offered a more obvious entry point.

Buddy Strong

The audition process was informal to the point of envy. Strong says Matthews operated more on chemistry and camaraderie than the rigorous, hours long try-out one might expect. "I studied the *Live in Chicago* album, and I went to meet Dave at his studio," Strong says. "I sat down, and he showed me this great piano he had—it almost has a saloon sound to it. Not knowing him very well, I didn't know if I was in a situation where I had to amaze him. I was just noodling, and the audition lasted like five minutes. I played 'Steady as We Go,' and it was over. He was like, 'Ah, man, let's go get something to eat.'"

Strong also wound up earning his first DMB studio credit on "Black and Blue Bird," a dreamy highlight from their latest LP, *Come Tomorrow*. "They were pretty much done with the album when they called me on. They sent me the tracks, and I recorded it right at my house. When I heard the track, I was like, 'This is amazing! It don't even need keys on it.'"

But the biggest thrill has been chasing the freewheeling high of their stage show. "They've been stretching me out," he says, detailing the grueling challenge of learning their back catalog. "That's one of the most challenging things in this band—there's so much material, but also so much experimentation. They groove so well without me—they've been doing it for 25 years. They love the gospel flavor, the funk flavor, the jazz. In this situation, I can just be me." ***Ryan Reed***

Farm-to-table Rock-and-roller: **Patrick Hallahan**

Patrick Hallahan may or may not be writing a cookbook. At home in Louisville, Ky., the My Morning Jacket drummer is enjoying his first significant break in "15 to 18 years," by crafting recipes in the comfort of his kitchen. "Food and music use the same parts of your brain and your creative flow," Hallahan says. "When you're cooking or when you're writing a song, the creative processes are basically identical. I think that's why chefs and musicians get along so well."

And, certainly, Hallahan has been spending a lot of time with chefs. To celebrate his 40th birthday, he went to the Austin Food and Wine Festival with his friend, Brooklyn-based barbeque expert Billy Durney. The goal was to learn as much as he could about live-fire cooking, and through Durney, Hallahan was introduced to experts like Jamie Bissonnette, Elliott Moss and Wayne Mueller. "It's like going to Mozart and taking music lessons," he asserts, later describing dishes like woodfired chicken and slow-cooked lamb chops that were all crafted with hot coals or open fires. "If I could only get over the smoke in my eyes, I'd be set," he laughs.

On the other side of the music-food divide, Hallahan mentions his "budding relationship" with Joe Kwon of the Avett Brothers. "He's a great cook, and he and I would both say that if we weren't doing this, we'd be cooking for our profession." In Louisville, Hallahan likes to cook (and dance) to Preservation Hall Jazz Band or old-school country records. In the mornings, he'll make breakfast with his daughter. At night, you might catch him re-watching episodes of *Chef's Table* on Netflix.

He also oversees the food offerings at MMJ's One Big Holiday festival, which has previously included his former restaurant Butchertown Grocery. Traveling through the often parallel worlds of music and food, Hallahan has witnessed the collective palate of most people (including concertgoers) evolve. "The Food Network and the celebrity-chef movement certainly made a giant impact not only on the availability of good ingredients, but people have also become more educated consumers," he asserts. "Food has improved at music festivals, and when we started touring, airport food was horrendous. Now chefs are opening restaurants in airports."

And what about that cookbook? "I'll have to see how many recipes I come up with," he says. "It will be a great project to force me to buckle down. It's like saying, 'I'm going to write an album,' It makes you sit down and write songs and not screw around." Then, a moment later, he jokingly laments what he just said. "So much for that summer off."

Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Stephen Bloch (Strong), Kenny Rodriguez (House of Yes), Josh Timmermans (Hallahan)

"Captain" Kirk Douglas

High Sierra

Versatile Roots: "Captain" Kirk Douglas

When asked to contemplate his memorable live performances as well as the indelible moments he's experienced as a concertgoer, The Roots' guitar player "Captain" Kirk Douglas points to March 1, 2012 as a day that satisfied both requirements.

"I was playing a benefit with The Roots for Barack Obama at ABC Carpet at all places. Aziz Ansari was performing as well and we played with Ben Folds. Then, after we were finished, there was a woman handing out champagne backstage and I asked her where she was from. Now, all day I had been trying to see Van Halen at the Garden, where they were playing but I was not able to get tickets on whatever app I was trying. So I asked this woman where she was from, expecting to hear what part of America or maybe her heritage. She told me that she normally works at Madison Square Garden but tonight she was working this function for Barack Obama. And I said, 'That's funny, I was really trying to go see Van Halen at the Garden tonight.' And she said, 'Well, let me see if I can help out with that.' So 20 minutes later, I found myself at the Garden in the front row at Van Halen. I can't think of anything that would top that. Just my shock of seeing them and how I was right in the front row and they did all my favorite songs. And yeah, I just outed myself as a Van Halen fan."

Of course as befits the guitarist of The Roots, who finds himself backing a wide array of musicians on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, Douglas recalls that during his formative years, "there was a stew of influences going on in my mind: Prince, Living Colour, P-Funk, The Cure, The Stones, Zappa, Fishbone, and Marvin Gaye." While living in Manhattan during his early 20s, Douglas immersed himself in the live music scene and he fondly recalls, "There were just so many venues that I didn't entirely know what I was going to see. I was just going on a little expedition in the night and I sort of expected the unexpected."

He still brings that perspective to bear even if in many instances, he's the one on stage. Douglas admits, "There are moments that if I sit down and think about it, I feel a little bit like Forrest Gump," he admits. "On *The Tonight Show*, I got to play guitar on 'All Day Sucker' with Stevie Wonder. I got to play 'Late in the Evening' with Paul Simon. I got to play with Elvis Costello multiple times. I remember getting to meet Johnny Marr from the Smiths and he invited me to play 'How Soon Is Now' with him. I went to the soundcheck and we practiced it, and then later my friends came down, and I didn't tell them I was gonna do it. So we're all watching Johnny Marr, and I told them, 'I have to go to the bathroom,' and then, he called me out to play it. There have been so many experiences like that that I just can't believe I've actually had. Like the moment where Prince was playing my guitar and then, he threw it and destroyed it. So Prince sent my guitar to the hospital to get it fixed and then, after he died, I was on BET playing the solo to 'Purple Rain' in a tribute to him on the same guitar that he broke. Stuff like that you couldn't write. It wouldn't seem believable. It's just been a blessed, blessed experience." ***Dean Budnick***

An Elevated Gathering: High Sierra Music Festival

High Sierra isn't just a music festival. Sure, music is the centerpiece, the main reason why fans eagerly anticipate the weekend's arrival and why the producers take such care to curate a crowd-pleasing lineup, but the event's appeal extends far beyond its stages.

There are campground parties—in which headlining artists have been known to show up and play or eat—the now-traditional sunrise kickball—which is strictly for the domain of the still-ups, not the just-ups—and an endless carousel of ever-changing sights and sounds.

There are parades, jugglers, unicyclers, face painters, daydream believers—and by night, the entire fairground turns into one giant costume party. At all times, it can be difficult to tell who is the professional "talent" versus who is just having fun.

High Sierra shares as much of its spirit with Mardi Gras and Burning Man as it does with Gathering of the Vibes or All Good. Which is one reason, perhaps, why in this crowded space of summer festivals—where every town, big or small, in America now has its own music summit—High Sierra continues to draw loyal legions from around the globe to its remote location in the heart of Plumas National Forest. High Sierra doesn't have fans—it has participants. Attendees are invested in the experience making them as important to the takeaway as the performing artists themselves.

Before becoming a national sensation, Sturgill Simpson performed on the smaller Big Meadow stage (and returned this year to headline Saturday night). Pretty Lights once played a lightly attended afternoon set in the Troubadour tent, while Bassnectar played an intimate late-night rager. The festival has even spawned its own house legends, who return almost every year, such as Lebo, Nathan Moore and Surprise Me Mr. Davis (who used High Sierra as the backdrop for their special reunion shows this summer).

High Sierra's history of taking the right chances on the right newcomers, as well as its role as a battleground festival capable of breaking acts on the West Coast, certainly is important to its identity as a long-standing summer institution that has withstood the industry's whims and fancies. But the music is still the star of this interdependent solar system, in which the light from its sun encourages life to thrive on orbiting planets. Those orbiting planets then spin off into the night on all different sorts of journeys with destinations unknown.

No matter how much the year has taken from you—no matter how beaten down, confused, frustrated, lonely, broken-hearted or torn up you may feel for any and all of the reasons—if you come to High Sierra with an open heart, you inevitably go home a hero. ***Benjy Eisen***

Wandering Further: Circles Around The Sun

Circles Around The Sun originated with an invitation from director Justin Kreutzmann to guitarist Neal Casal, asking him to compose music for five films that screened during the setbreaks at 2015's Fare Thee Well shows. Casal assented and gathered together a quartet comprised of Chris Robinson Brotherhood bandmate Adam MacDougall on keys, bassist Dan Horne (Beachwood Sparks, Jonathan Wilson) and drummer Mark Levy (The Congress). They recorded five hours of original music on the fly at Castaway 7 Studios in Ventura, Calif, drawing inspiration from the Grateful Dead. The results were so well-received that Rhino released a 2-CD set of highlights, *Interludes for the Dead* in the fall of 2015 and Circles made their first-ever live appearance at Lockn' in 2016.

"We were kind of reluctant to even play this stuff live at first," reveals Casal. "We were kind of precious about it. The way it came about Fare the Well was this kind of a magical moment and it wasn't intended to ever be a record or a band or anything like that. We just made music for that specific purpose. Part of our thinking was to leave it at that—just leave that magic alone—and move on to whatever else we were gonna do. But people reacted so well to it, and we got so many requests

Circles Around The Sun

Jay Blakesberg (Douglas), Stuart Levine (High Sierra), Matthew Mendenhall (Circles)

to play live, that we finally decided to do it. It transitioned so easily and it went so much better than we thought it would. I don't think any of us had ever been in instrumental bands before, so none of us were used to that. It's just a whole other discipline when you're playing live. But that first show was just such a great way to open up the door and even though we haven't played a lot of shows yet, every time we do, the band seems to get better, the chemistry gets better, and that's what led us into making a second record, just trying to keep it all going."

That new album, *Let It Wander*, found the group returning to Castaway 7 Studios to expand on their Dead-accented lingua franca. Casal explains that while the new record, "doesn't contain any direct GD themes, the sound of the band is still the four of us improvising together, so it will feel familiar to fans. But we definitely went in some new directions and tried to evolve our sound past where we started three years ago. We added some different keyboard sounds, I expanded my guitar pedalboard, and we added some percussion, and will bring these things forward in a live setting. Where the first record was live in the studio, we did some overdubs this time, worked on the mixes longer, and were more detail-oriented. Chuck D. stopped by and did the intro on 'One For Chuck.' That was such an honor and so exciting for us." ***Dean Budnick***

A Good Time with Garcia: **Legion of Mary**

In 1975, with the Grateful Dead on hiatus, Jerry Garcia offered some thoughts on his current touring project. He explained, "Legion of Mary is a different sort of group for me. I don't write material for it. We play other people's songs that we like and just have a good time. It's like a low profile is more desirable for me. The Dead and this group are two different trips. And this one has a lot less pressure associated with it because we haven't made an effort to get famous at it. That's one of the things that makes it possible. I couldn't take the pressure of being a double celebrity. It's a drag just being it once."

Although Legion of Mary performed less than 60 dates, their live recordings still provide an opportunity to hear Jerry in one of his most comfortable environments, kicking back and reveling in the music. This was literally true at the group's home venue, the Keystone Berkeley, where in contrast with the intense trappings of the Grateful Dead, the dressing room was in the back of the venue, requiring the musicians to walk through the audience to the stage, which they did with minimal fanfare.

Merl Saunders, Paul Humphrey, Jerry Garcia, John Kahn and Martin Fierro (l-r)

The group featured two other soloists—Merl Saunders on Hammond B-3 and Martin Fierro on saxophone, flute and percussion—as well as a rhythm section featuring longtime Garcia accompanist John Kahn on bass and Ron Tutt on drums. Tutt's involvement was notable on a few levels, as the drummer, who would go on to perform in Neil Diamond's band for over 35 years, was then also a member of Elvis Presley's group. Looking back, he recalls, "I would be playing one night with Jerry and the guys where we would be wearing t-shirts and jeans and the next night I'd be in Vegas with Elvis in two-piece rhinestone jumpsuits." Tutt remembers that his introduction to Garcia came through Kahn: "He called me to do a recording with Jerry and we played a couple of days at a studio in L.A. (these sessions appeared on 1974's *Compliments*). We got along very well and the music was cool and they asked if I would be interested in doing some live gigs up in the Frisco area. It was one of my favorite areas, so I said sure."

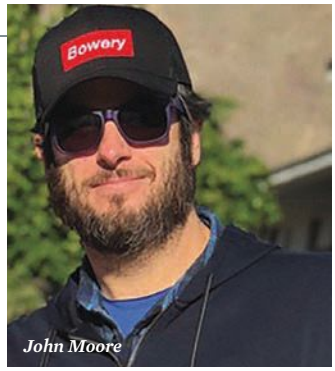
Merl Saunders Jr., who attended most of these shows while still a teenager, recalls, "As a kid it was fascinating for me. The dressing room would be a massive smoke-a-thon and they would be laughing their heads off. That's also how they came up with a name for the band. They were just joking around over the course of a few weeks, throwing out suggestions before they went on stage and during the break. John Kahn came up with Legion of Mary and everyone just agreed on it. It was that simple. Garcia and my father were happy because they didn't have to use their names anymore."

In many respects Legion of Mary is the culmination of Garcia's work with Merl Saunders, which began in late 1970 and included former Credence Clearwater Revival guitarist Tom Fogerty for a stretch. By the time Legion of Mary wrapped up in July 1975, the guitar player and organist had honed an unspoken language. Their friendship would endure even if Saunders did not appear in what would become known as the Jerry Garcia Band, as Merl Jr. recalls that Garcia would continue to visit his father at home over the years, leaving a guitar behind so that the pair could jam at a moment's notice. Tutt lauds Saunders as "a master at the sounds and effects of the B-3. He was a really gifted organist, like Jack McDuff and Jimmy Smith."

Legion of Mary also marked Garcia's last extended work with Martin Fierro; they first met in Golden Gate Park around 1969 when Garcia invited Fierro to join him on a live date at the Matrix with Howard Wales. (As Fierro later said, "It was love at first bite, man.") Fierro would go on to gig in the Jerry Garcia and Merl Saunders Band and would appear on the Grateful Dead's *Wake of the Flood*, before joining that group on their brief 1973 horn tour. Tutt singles out Fierro's facility as a percussionist beyond his gift with woodwinds, noting, "It's easy for some percussionists to get in the way of the drummer but Martin had an innate ability to sense where things were going. It always added another layer to the cake."

As for the music as a whole, the drummer observes, "I feel like the format of Legion of Mary was more like a jazz group than anything else because it touched on so many types of music, so many far-reaching styles." Indeed, akin to a jazz collective, Legion of Mary offered instrumental arrangements of songs by artists such as Stevie Wonder ("Creepin'") and Smokey Robinson ("Since I Lost My Baby"), along with instrumental compositions by Eddie Harris ("Freedom Jazz Dance"), Freddie Hubbard ("Little Sunflower") and Donny Hathaway ("Valdez In The Country"). The repertoire also incorporated a wide palette of originals with lyrics from artists such as: Chuck Berry ("Let It Rock"), Allen Toussaint ("I'll Take A Melody"), Norman Blake ("Last Train From Poor Valley"), Gene Clark and Roger McGuinn ("It's No Use"), Randy Newman ("You Can Leave Your Hat On"), Jesse Winchester ("Every Word You Say") and Holland/Dozier/Holland ("Roadrunner," "I Second That Emotion).

In looking back on this time with Garcia, Tutt reminiscences, "Whether it was a dressing room or whatever, he constantly had his guitar with him and he was playing it. He was on a mission. But on stage, Jerry's music was very laidback, very freestyle. He liked trying various things out and see where things led. He was never demanding. He loved to laugh and have a great time." ***Dean Budnick***



John Moore

The Godfather of Indie-Jam: **John Moore**

John Moore has a detailed list of every concert he's attended, but he's missing one key piece of evidence. "The first show I ever went to was Rick James and he didn't show up. Next up was Prince and he canceled," Moore says with a grin as he scrolls through his show log on his phone. "I begged my dad to keep the ticket stub, but he was like, 'No, I want my $12.50 back!'"

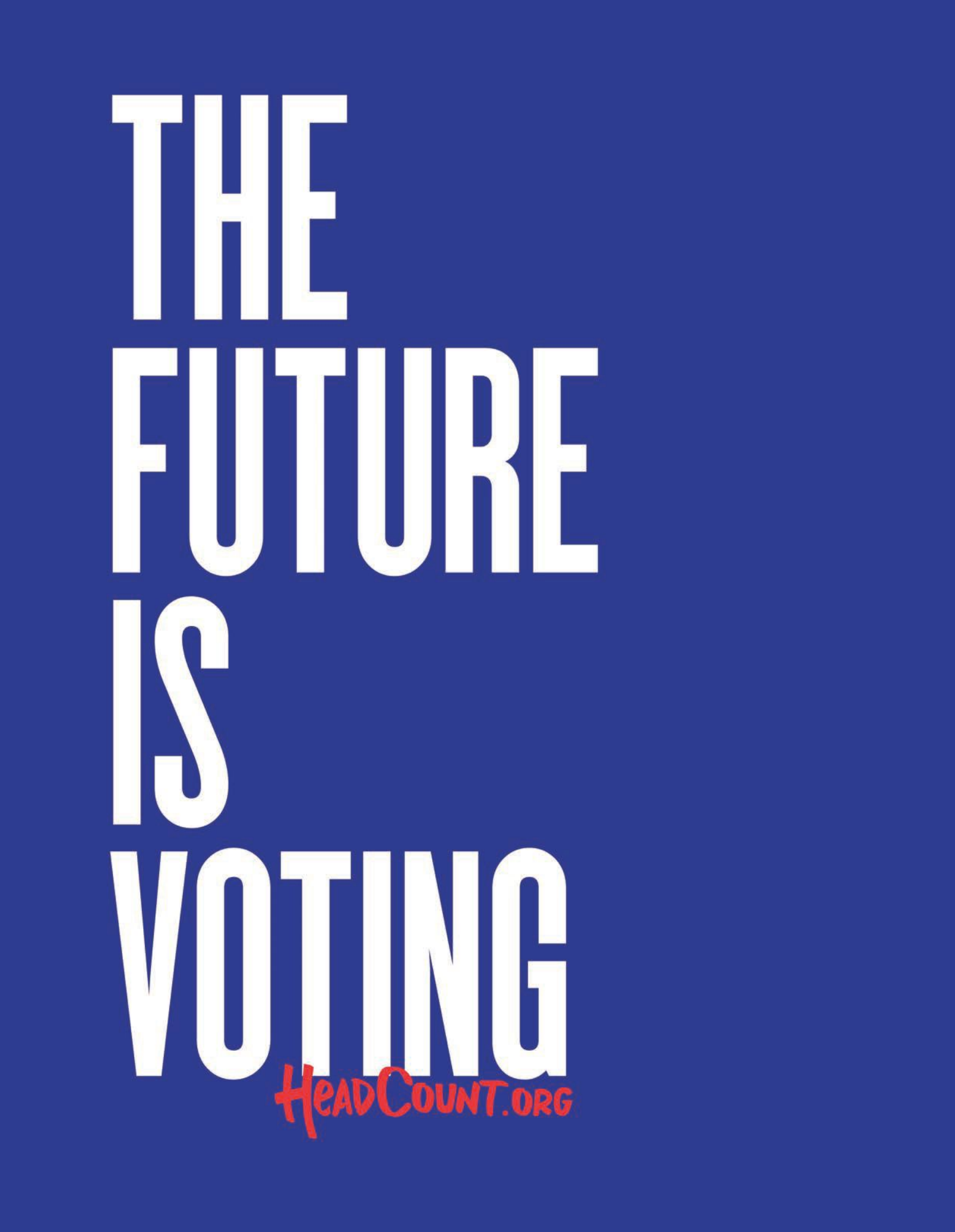
It is a warm summer Friday and Moore is taking a breather at his currently up-for-sale Downtown Manhattan apartment between meetings. As the co-founder of New York-bred Bowery Presents, Moore has had as big a hand as any concert promoter in helping make indie the defining rock trend of the early 21st-century. Bowery's venues have served as incubators for area heroes like The Strokes, Yeah Yeah Yeahs and The National—and can't miss destinations for frequent out-of-town guests like The White Stripes, Kings of Leon and My Morning Jacket—and their ability to grow bands from bars to arenas has helped shift the live music paradigm back to clubs on a national scale. Yet, as is often the case, he's got the Dead on his mind.

"We are living in an era where so many people are coming out of the Dead closet," Moore says. "As far as I'm concerned, the Dead were the first indie-rock band."

Raised in Richmond, Va., Moore has always had eclectic tastes. His early concertgoing experiences ranged from those ill-fated Rick James and Prince shows to the Go-Go's, Herbie Hancock, Steel Pulse and U2, the latter of whom he saw at the Hampton Coliseum in 1985.

He first started listening to the Dead in the mid-'80s, taking in his first Jerry Garcia Band show at

Saunders Family Archives (LOM)


THE
FUTURE
IS
VOTING
HeadCount.org

Merriwether Post Pavillion in 1989 and his first Dead concert in 1990. "'Let the Good Times Roll' was the first song I saw—I get hairs on my neck every time I listen to it," he says. "Then that summer, I graduated from high school and went to Dead summer camp: Pittsburgh, Raleigh, D.C., Foxborough, Orchard Park, two at Deer Creek, skipped Chicago and then Brent [Mydland] died."

Even as he moved deeper into the Dead's orbit, Moore continued to listen to a range of other acts like early favorites R.E.M., who led him to another Athens, Ga. institution, Widespread Panic. He checked out his first Panic show in '89, and took in his inaugural Phish concert in 1990.

After graduating from college, Moore moved to North Carolina to work for Mammoth Records and then relocated with the label to New York in 1996. Once in New York, Moore became a regular at Wetlands, signing Strangefolk to Mammoth and championing venue regulars like Guster. (He fondly recalls that singer Ryan Miller used to crash at his apartment after their shows.)

"I was going out and seeing tons of music," he says. "In 1999, I met Matt Hickey, who was booking Bowery Ballroom and Mercury Lounge. I asked him if I could buy him lunch and, midway through, I said, 'I want your job if you ever leave.'" As luck would have it, Hickey ended up transitioning to the agency side soon after and, when Mercury Lounge's talent buyer Ryan Gentles left to manage The Strokes, Moore landed his dream job.

From there, he started working at the larger Bowery Ballroom and, in 2004, launched Bowery Presents with his partners to oversee those clubs and promote shows at a range of other spaces around the city. Though Moore continued to work with jam, hip-hop, classic rock, pop and world music acts, he became known as an indie-tastemaker, using his years following the Dead and that scene's communal, fan-friendly vibe to shepherd the likes of Arctic Monkeys, Interpol and The Black Keys to international fame.

"I would be booking all these shows during the week and then going to see Phish and the members of the Dead on the weekends," Moore says with a grin. "I'm not sure if anything makes me happier than the sensation of reading that Phish or the Dead busted out something crazy the night before. People forget but until Phish covered 'Terrapin Station' [in 1998], and Trey and Page played with Phil, there was always the question of whether bands like them and Aquarium Rescue Unit, who had this Sun Ra thing going, were into the Dead."

Bowery Presents eventually started opening new clubs like Music Hall of Williamsburg and Terminal 5 in New York, before expanding their reach to other markets. In 2017, AEG acquired a stake in Bowery Presents; they now promote shows under that banner around the country.

As the Dead have regained a cultural cache in certain circles, Moore—who often sports a denim jacket with a Stealie on the back—has enjoyed seeing many of the artists he's worked with over the years discover their music. He attended all five Fare Thee Well shows in 2015 and took in a good portion of Phish's Baker's Dozen run last summer too. "I remember talking to Conor Oberst about *Workingman's Dead* and *American Beauty* 10 years ago and saying, 'Forget what you've heard, forget the long jams. This is great American music.'" ***Mike Greenhaus***

Drink It Up: **The Musical Beer Boom**

Does anything pair better with live music than a cold beer? As the craft beer industry continues to grow by leaps and bounds, musicians are starting to get in on the fun, teaming up with brewmasters to create their own signature IPAs, ales and lagers.

For a lifelong home brewer like Kyle Hollingsworth of The String Cheese Incident, music was an avenue into beer world. The keyboardist regularly hosts events like Hoppy Holidays, Kyle's Brew Fest and Hulaween's Craft Beer Corner, bringing his two passions together in harmony. So far, Hollingsworth has amplified his status as a legitimate beer aficionado put his name on Boulder Beer's Hoopla Pale Ale, Stone Brewing's Collective Distortion IPA (brewed alongside Alice Cooper guitarist Kerri Kelli), Cigar City's Happening Now Session IPA and more.

According to Telluride Brewing Company's chief brewing officer and co-founder Chris Fish, the experience is beneficial for the breweries as well. Telluride's recent collaboration with Greensky Bluegrass—the Greensky American Lager—quickly became one of their most sought-after beers.

"We released it just before Telluride Bluegrass Festival, and it has been hard to keep up with the demand ever since," Fish says. In fact, fans were so excited to get their hands of the Greensky American Lager that the brewery had to start enacting "buy limits," so the beer could be available to the masses.

Fish says Telluride and Greensky Bluegrass were a natural fit, and he cites live music as one of the "founding passions" of the Telluride Brewing Company. The collaboration process was fun and friendly, with the band opting to create a beer they

INSPIRING ALBUMS TURNING 50: Mixed for the Hallucinations: *Anthem of the Sun* at 50

The Grateful Dead first scaled the charts in 1968, but not how they intended. Minor characters in Tom Wolfe's best-selling book *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, the Dead were bit players in much of the coverage of the emerging San Francisco psychedelic renaissance, from Joan Didion's skeptical "Slouching Towards Bethlehem" to exploitation LPs, while their Haight-Ashbury neighbors in Jefferson Airplane pumped out the hits. Though the Dead's 1967 Warner Brothers debut *almost* captured what they sounded like live, it also failed to manifest the LSD-fueled group mind twirling behind their music. That would change.

To Warner Brothers chagrin, though, the Grateful Dead weren't after hits. They were after human consciousness. Released in the summer of 1968, *Anthem of the Sun* remains the Grateful Dead's boldest step into the avant-garde, an experimental masterpiece that pioneered a blend of live recordings and studio experimentation, and their most realized studio approximation of the psychedelic experience. It was a technical achievement, with the band and their friends inventing one studio hack after another in order to complete the album. (Recently reissued as a cheaper/dirtier print-on-demand-style paperback, Blair Jackson's essential *Grateful Dead Gear* goes deep under *Anthem*'s hood.)

"Mixed for the hallucinations," as Jerry Garcia would infamously say, the road to *Anthem* would leave behind a trail of pissed-off engineers, angry letters from the record company, and a near arrest when, high on acid, new auxiliary drummer Mickey Hart borrowed LSD chemist Owsley Stanley's Nagra tape machine to make field recordings at the San Francisco Zoo in the middle of the night. It would also leave behind blown minds.

Orchestrated primarily by Jerry Garcia and Phil Lesh with chief engineer Dan Healy, the core three would perform a ballet-like mix at the studio console to realize Lesh's epiphany of "the sound of a thousand-petal lotus, unfolding in constant renewal," an all-hands-on-deck studio-as-instrument performance of knob-twiddling and fader-fading. Splicing in an electronic composition by Tom Constanten, Lesh's pal and the band's avant-weirdo-in-residence, the petals' unfolding also featured Constanten dropping a spinning top across the sounding board of a piano, a John Cage move that apparently flipped the wig of the attending engineer.

Capturing the band's two live suites of the era—the psychedelic "That's It for the Other One" / "New Potato Caboose" / "Born Cross-Eyed" on one side, and Pigpen's bluesier show-stopping "Alligator" / "Caution" on the flip—*Anthem* would also quickly become dated by the band's standards. Within four years, all but one of the album's pieces, Bob Weir's middle section of "The Other One," were gone from live shows. Yet, the Grateful Dead left behind an era that they, themselves, would shed more completely than perhaps any other, from the complicated harmonies of Lesh and Bobby Petersen's mythopoeic "New Potato Caboose" to Weir's lost psych-pop swooper "Born Cross-Eyed."

A new two-CD edition features a heady lenticular iteration of Bill Walker's cover—seek out his website for a detailed explanation of the original—and excellent liner notes by Steve Silberman. It also features Garcia's 1971 remix (issued with a white LP sleeve), a more subdued realization of the album's components that mostly serves to highlight the richness of the original.

Neither the 1968 nor 1971 version scaled the charts, nor even appreciatively built the band's Deadhead audience. Rather, *Anthem of the Sun* remains not only a psychedelic statement but a constant: as ambitious in 1968 as it is during the newest wave of the psychedelic renaissance now unfolding (in constant renewal) a half-century later. Nothing lasts, but everything returns.

Jesse Jarnow

A Sound Without a Time Stamp: **The Band's *Music From Big Pink***

Just over five decades ago, Rick Danko, Levon Helm, Garth Hudson, Richard Manuel and Robbie Robertson were collectively and commonly still known as the

nameless group that backed Bob Dylan. In 1967, the ensemble moved into a rented house in the Hudson Valley town of West Saugerties, N.Y., to work with Dylan on a series of informal recordings that subsequently became *The Basement Tapes*. The house, with its distinctive pink siding, was called "Big Pink," and would become the home base for the quintet, now christened simply The Band.

In 1968, The Band signed with Capitol Records, and on July 1, following recording sessions in both New York City and Los Angeles, issued their debut album, *Music From Big Pink*. An almost cleansing antithesis to the psychedelic remnants of the Summer of Love, the 11 songs—including the indisputable classic, "The Weight"—are a melting pot of musical idioms, created in the basement of that pink house and performed with accordant unvarnished authenticity.

50 years later, the album stands as one the finest debuts ever and an enduring influential work for generations of artists. To celebrate the album's golden anniversary, The Band will reissue *Music From Big Pink*, with previously unreleased tracks and new mixes overseen by Robertson and renowned engineer Bob Clearmountain.

Robertson shared his thoughts on the vital creative process behind *Music From Big Pink:*

This idea of having this place that we called Big Pink had been a dream of mine for years. I wanted a workshop. I wanted a clubhouse. I wanted a place to go where I could create, where I could start putting together these things that I had in the back of my mind. I wanted a place where we could take all of the musicality that we had been gathering over the years, playing the chitlin' circuit down South. Everywhere that we played, we were always gathering. It was like woodshedding; learning our skills, sharpening our blades, getting it to a place where it never had to be obvious.

We had been in New York City and we couldn't find anywhere to really create. It was always like we were bothering somebody or somebody was bothering us. Finally, there was the idea of going up into the mountains, into Upstate New York. Bob already had a house up there and [Dylan's manager] Albert Grossman said we could get a place up there and make all the noise we wanted. We could do anything.

We wanted something like Les Paul had, a home studio. We couldn't afford really expensive equipment in the basement, but it gave us a place good enough that we could start writing and creating on a level that didn't have to follow in any footsteps.

We started making this gumbo. We put some gospel music in there. We put some mountain music in there. We put a little bit of blues. We put in a little bit of rockabilly. We put in all these pieces of musicality until, finally, we stirred it up and thought we had something. We were equipped to do something that was our destiny.

At Big Pink, in the basement, that was a place to draw the diagrams. That was a place to create the feel—the idea, a direction. We didn't have a setup where we could make a real record. We thought, "How do we take what we're doing here, bring it out into the world, and take it to the studio and do it there?" That was the objective.

John Simon, our producer, understood that. We all, in our minds, knew how we made this particular kind of music together, which was different than anything we'd ever done before. We didn't sound that way at all with Ronnie Hawkins. We didn't sound that way at all with The Hawks or with Bob Dylan. This was a different wavelength, a different approach. We could hear it inside us somewhere.

When we went into Phil Ramone's A&R Studios, John Simon told us it was the best sounding studio in New York. We go in the studio and they tell us this is how you set up, where you set up. That's how they do it here. That's how they make great-sounding records. We're like, "Oh, OK."

We did exactly what we're told. We started playing a song, just ran over something. We were working with headphones. We get halfway through the song and I said, "This doesn't work. We can't play music like this." [The studio engineers] were like, "What are you talking about?"

I said we have to set up in a circle to see each other and communicate, musically. That's how we make whatever sound we make together, through this communication. They said it's going to sound like shit. We said we don't have a choice. We can't set up with everybody off in a cubby hole somewhere.

That's why it's called Music From Big Pink. *Because it was created in an atmosphere, and in a certain language. If we went somewhere else and couldn't speak that language, we didn't know what we were talking about.*

So, we set up in a circle and the engineers were just shaking their heads. They said there was going to be so much spill. There's going to be so much leakage. It's going to sound awful. They were also thinking about their reputation, of this studio and knowing how they normally do it.

There was a lot of leakage. John Simon said, "Let's use microphones that only pick up what's right in front of them." The engineers told us they were cheap microphones. And John said, "We don't have any choice. These guys, [The Band], if they're not happy, this isn't going to work."

We put these Electro-Voice RE15s on everything: on the drums, on the vocals, the piano. They were going along with it, but you could see the pain in the engineers' faces. Now we could see one another. Now, we're in sync with one another. We're jamming around, playing some music, and it feels good to us. Now, we recognize the noise that we make. Now, we're OK, we're comfortable. That was the key for us. The engineers said, "I think we're getting somewhere."

We started running over "Tears of Rage." We ran it down, and John Simon says, "You've got to come in and hear this. This is beyond any of us in here—what we thought we were going to get." This was the first moment we heard what The Band sounded like. We heard what we just did and figured out what we needed to do emotionally in the music to take it to the next place. We all locked in. We ran it down a couple more times, and John said, "We got it." We heard it and said, "That's it. That's what we were looking for. That's what we sound like. That's what we do."

We didn't know what to compare it to. Because we recorded that song first, it ended up being the first song on the album. The record company said, "Do you really want to start your record with a long, slow song?" We were like, "Yeah, what's wrong with that?"

That was the key to opening the door. It was really speaking that language that we invented in that basement and bringing it into the studio. We had no idea about satisfying anybody. We wanted to make a sound that you couldn't put a time-stamp on and, at the same time, this was 1968, one of the most vital periods in American history. We were swimming around in that.

We were against the idea of going in and making popular music. We were so not trendy in our taste in music; we didn't want any part of that. We had come in on a train where most of the music we admired was obscure or was something that we discovered that was fantastic. It could've been something Garth turned us on to in Egyptian music. Or it could've been a gospel group that nobody's heard about but this track is killer. That's what we were drawn to. We weren't trying to be underground. We had to be so honest with this music because we didn't know any better.

When they say this is the 50th anniversary, I'm just mind-boggled by that to begin with. I'm relieved that it holds up, to me. I'm relieved that it's had such a tremendous influence on music and musicians over the years. When I listen to this music now, I'm very happy I can feel that way about it. I look at it with a real warmth and pride. I'm very proud of the guys, my brothers, that I played this music with. Larson Sutton

themselves would drink on tour.

"With all the time they spend on the road, they were looking for something more sessionable, specifically [something like] PBR," Fish laughs, later joking that they scrapped the beer's original name—Greensky Blue Ribbon—for legal reasons.

As Fish sees it, it's a wonderful thing when musicians and brewers get together. After all, "to celebrate the finer things in life, beer is required."

Below, enjoy a flight that bridges the gap between music and beer:

Greensky American Lager by Telluride Brewing Company

According to the fine folks at Telluride Brewing, this "pure sessionable lager" has "a delicious Mosaic hop backbone" and it is designed for sippin' on summer tour. Both Telluride Brewing and Greensky Bluegrass have roots in Colorado, so it goes without saying that this limited brew is only available within the confines of The Centennial State.

Brotherhood Steam Beer by Anchor Brewing

San Francisco's Anchor Brewing celebrated Chris Robinson Brotherhood's 2014 record *Phospherescent Harvest* by giving the band a signature beverage. The copper-colored Brotherhood Steam is a malty "Extra Special Lager," featuring artwork by fellow San Francisco local Alan Forbes. In Anchor's eyes, the Brotherhood Steam is a "Golden State Collaboration of handcrafted California tunes and handcrafted California brews."

Ground Score IPA by Sweetwater Brewery

You're probably already familiar with the story of Ground Score—the origins of our collaboration with Kyle Hollingsworth and Sweetwater Brewing have been detailed within the pages of this very magazine. Bold and hazy (with 7.1% alcohol) its hops were hand chosen with the help of the family-owned Crosby Hop Farm in Woodburn, Ore.

Nothing Too Fancy Pale Ale by Boulder Beer Company

In 2015, Rock Brothers Brewing, Cigar City Brewing and Boulder Beer Company came together to create the Nothing Too Fancy Pale Ale, a year-round liquid ode to prog-jammers Umphrey's McGee. Living up to its name, Nothing Too Fancy is fresh flavored, easy to drink and best served alongside a high-quality UM soundboard recording.

Cash or Trade Double IPA by Fiddlehead Brewing Company

Cash or Trade—the innovative "embrace the face" ticketing site—

and Vermont's Fiddlehead Brewing Company created this American Double/Imperial IPA for jam fans and beer fans alike. When it was released in June, Fiddlehead celebrated by throwing a party and inviting local Northeastern acts like Mad Mountain Scramblers and Formula 5 to perform at the brewery. It might be tough to find this beer for now, but the brewery recently teased a 2019 re-release.

American Beauty by Dogfish Head

When Dogfish Head asked Deadheads to help craft a signature beer for their favorite band, the brewery received over 1,500 recipe ideas. In the end, organic granola became the secret ingredient in Dogfish Head's American Beauty. According to the brewery, granola "was the main course in millions of parking lot meals," and its toasty flavor complements the "all-American hops and barley" used within this heady brew.

Reality Based Pils by Mikkeller

Signature beers aren't exclusive to the jamband set, and they aren't exclusive to American breweries either. The National and Danish microbrewery Mikkeller concocted the Reality Based Pils in 2018 at the behest of Mikkeller CEO/diehard fan Mikkel Borg Bjergsø. The name of the 5% ABV pilsner comes from the band's track "Walk it Back," and its artwork nods to both The National's *Sleep Well Beast* and brewery mascots Henry & Sally.

Hoppy Hour Hero Moe.saic IPA by Matt Brewing Company / Saranac Brewery

moe. have long been fans of Saranac. Over the past decade, the band has performed at their Utica, N.Y. brewery over a dozen times, and the Hoppy Hour Hero Moe.saic IPA solidified their union for years to come. The brewery describes the band's namesake brew as a "liquid jam-session," and much like moe. this beer is impressively versatile. Apparently, it pairs well with everything from "carrot cake" to "sharp american cheese."

Half Yuszch Pilsner by Highland Brewing

Nathaniel Rateliff has joined the ranks of musicians-turned-brewers with Highland's Half Yuszch Pilsner. This light offering is a Czech-style pilsner, and it was inspired by the band's "Yuszch" (or usual) tradition of following a shot of liquor with a beer. This brew is also a bit of a rarity, as it was mostly available during a few stops on Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats' summer tour.

Foam Pilsner by Sierra Nevada

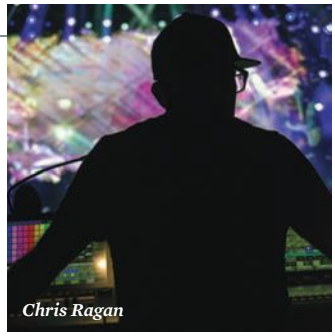
Sierra Nevada created the Foam Pilsner in 2009 for Phish's Festival 8 in Indio, Calif. Amazingly, the following year, this refreshing 5.5% brew won gold at the World Beer Cup for best German-style pilsner. Since then, the Foam Pilsner has appeared at Phish festivals and multi-night runs coast-to-coast, including the Baker's Dozen in Madison Square Garden.

Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Still of the Moment: **The Weavers: *Wasn't That a Time!***

My earliest moviegoing memory—surely reinforced by my mother's telling, but still lodged in me-is the weird shame of an usher not wanting to admit me to see Jim Brown's *Wasn't That a Time!*, the 1981 documentary about the reunion of folk quartet The Weavers. We'd driven into the City from Long Island for it. They were unquestionably my favorite band—my *first* favorite band. I was taken by the energy of their voices, the mysterious old folk melodies, and Pete Seeger's friendly spirit. My mother informed the usher in no uncertain terms that I *wasn't* too young, and would be perfectly behaved, which I was, watching attentively and singing along, exactly as the band intended.

A genuine top-10 pop act in the early 1950s, the band's string of hits turned folk songs into global standards, including Lead Belly's "Goodnight Irene," "The Wreck of John B"—what the Beach Boys retitled "Sloop John B"—the South African "Wimoweh"—with nary a line about a sleeping lion when the Weavers did it and more. They wrote "If I Had a Hammer," considered too controversial to sing onstage until the '60s. Grown from the activist organization People's Songs, The Weavers' repertoire evolved from deeply set beliefs about class


Chris Ragan

equality, social justice, and world peace—beliefs closely associated with the entwined American socialist movements in the years before World War II. Entering the hit parade at the same time that Joseph McCarthy and others began to fabricate associations between the American Communist Party and Soviet espionage, The Weavers found themselves near the center of the Red Scare, blacklisted out of a career.

Reuniting a few years later, the band swapped hit singles for best-selling live LPs, influencing musicians like Jerry Garcia, David Crosby and Jefferson Airplane's Paul Kantner, before breaking up in 1963. Jim Brown's film captures the band a decade-and-a-half-later, reuniting (again) around Lee Hays, the band's bass singer and chief theoretician. An alcoholic in failing health, he was nearing the end of his life, both of his legs amputated following untreated diabetes. Filled with the same quietly absurd Southern humor as during The Weavers' peak, the Arkansas-born Hays was sometimes erroneously referred to as a former minister, and in Brown's film, it's easy to see and hear why.

Needing a blast of radical politics in the form of hopeful harmonies, I watched the film for the first time in years a week or two after the 2016 presidential election, and I certainly got that. But, as Marty DiBergi said, "I got more, a *lot* more." Watching the band find closure for Hays, it's also possible to sense—however fleetingly—the wounds they'd collectively endured, and the intentionality with which they'd done their cultural battle.

My book about the Weavers, *Wasn't That a Time: The Weavers, the Blacklist, and the Battle for the Soul of America*—their first biography—comes out in November (on Election Day), named for the same Weavers song as Brown's film, a song that earned all four members subpoenas from the House Un-American Activities Committee. More than anything, though, it was Lee Hays who sent me spiraling into the band's history, speaking exactly the words I needed to hear when I watched the film decades later.

"This too shall pass," he told the Carnegie Hall audience, only a few weeks after the 1980 presidential

Jake Sherman and Katy Tur with the members of Phish

election. "I've had kidney stones and I should know." *Jesse Jarnow*

Letting It Shine: **Chris Ragan**

Back on October 20, 1984 Chris Ragan attended his first Grateful Dead show at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse, N.Y. At the time, he was an eighth grader and, as he recalls, "I had a friend whose parents were professors at the University and all of the sudden people started camping all over their neighborhood. I saw all the t-shirts with skulls so I figured that the Grateful Dead was a heavy metal band. At that time I was into rap music, not metal, but we ended up meeting some of the Heads and we got tickets to the show. From the first note I had this giant feeling of community and I wanted to be part of that." Over 30 years later he is, serving as Dead & Company's show director/lighting director/lighting designer.

It's been quite a journey over the intervening years that found him touring with moe., Gov't Mule, The Strokes, Secret Machines, Common and other acts while lighting up such festivals as Lockn', Firefly, Electric Daisy Carnival NYC and Mountain Jam. He's also worked with Chris Kuroda at Phish's Magnaball, creating a 360 degree, immersive lighting experience around the concert field.

Ragan was a promising oil painter who had moved into sculpture at Syracuse University when, in 1993, he partnered with his neighbor, Mimi Fishman (the mother of Phish's drummer) in Ragfish Productions to create stage backdrops and T-shirt designs. He also began experimenting with building his own light boxes and after meeting the guys in moe., "I ended up flipping some switches on the lighting console when they played at a little local club. The next thing I knew, we were down at the Wetlands and I'm flicking some more switches and I just wouldn't leave them alone. I was like, 'You guys need to hire me.' And looking at it all now, it was completely insane because although I thought it was a logical thing to do, they could barely feed themselves." However, Ragan remained persistent, selling his Harley and buying three automated lights he began using with moe.

Ragan is now an account executive and designer at BML Blackbird, while also pursuing some projects with his own Raygun Designs. In the fall of 2015 after operating lights at Lockn' for the Billy & The Kids show with special guest Bob Weir, he received an invitation to tour with Dead & Company. It's a massive endeavor: along with the main lighting console, Jim Rood assists in programming, while Jonathan Singer generates video content as the live visual artist.

"When they first called me," Ragan remembers, "all I knew was that they were going to play Madison Square Garden, which is the ultimate place for me to do a show. It all just took off from there and it's been everything I could have hoped for and probably a little bit more." ***Dean Budnick***

Talking Heads: **Katy Tur and Jake Sherman**

On March 27, 2017, NBC News Correspondent Katy Tur, who anchors the 2 p.m. edition of *MSNBC Live*, welcomed *Politico* senior writer and fellow Phish fan Jake Sherman for his thoughts on House Intelligence Committee Chair Devin Nunes. After Tur introduced "my friend, my friend Jake Sherman," her smirking guest countered this reference to the *Rift* song by commenting, "I'm bouncing around the room a little bit with all of his explanations."

And the game was afoot.

Over the weeks and months to follow, the two continued to up their game. For instance, on July 11, when speaking about potential legislation to modify the Affordable Care Act, Sherman went for the fitting "Mike's Song" reference: "I simply don't see it, it seems like they're trapped in time and don't know what to do when it comes to this legislation." To which Tur immediately quipped, "Or feeling like it's not so stupendous living in that tube."

The ability of the two reporters to

RELIX
MARKETPLACE

VISIT RELIXMARKETPLACE.COM
LIMITED EDITION POSTERS, PAST ISSUES, CLOTHING + MORE!

drop Phish references deftly into conversation, while remaining on point, is a joy to behold. (Tur also volleyed back and forth with Virginia Congressman Tom Garrett, and on the record-breaking Monday afternoon following Phish's Baker's Dozen, she nearly matched the group's performance total by delivering 12 Phish drops.)

Looking back on their initial exchange, Sherman reflects, "The whole thing was kind of organic. Katy somehow found out that I was a big Phish fan, and she started dropping lyrics when I was on her show. At first, I was taken aback and couldn't really respond. I had a bad secret smile. But since then, I've upped my game. We talk about a lot of serious stuff. But that doesn't mean we can't—and shouldn't—have fun."

To which Tur retorts, "Jake had no idea he was stepping into the freezer but he was quickly bought for the price of a flagon of rice. Now he's surrendered to the flow and, together, we run like an antelope out of control." ***Dean Budnick***

You Know, For Kids: **Musack and Music Education NonProfits**

Donick Cary, a television writer and producer who got his start on *Late Show with David Letterman* and has worked on hit programs like *The Simpsons, Parks and Recreation* and *Silicon Valley*, grew up on Nantucket Island where, in 2008, a rash of teen suicides led Cary and his friends to reach out to their home community.

"It started, as with many good things—at a birthday party," Cary explains. Around that same time, Cary—who now lives in Los Angeles—was back on Nantucket for a party that featured the reunion of an old ska-punk band from his high school.

"We had all been hit with it when we were growing up," Cary says of the risk of teen suicide on the island. "We started talking about this phenomenon of growing up on an island, going through your teen years and feeling powerless—and how we got though those years. We kept going back to music. That's what would get you through the winter each year and make you feel not so trapped and isolated."

Inspired, Cary took a trip to his old high school, where he spoke with a music teacher about how to help the students. "He said, 'I have 10 kids that want to play guitar, and I have no guitars,'" Cary remembers. "It was one of those lightning-bolt moments—once in a while, you get shown the light. Six months later, he called me and said, 'I have 10 more kids; does your charity have 10 more guitars?'

George Wein and Quint Davis at Jazz Fest

Musack guitar recipient

Then I was like, 'I better get a charity together.'"

Those humble beginnings eventually grew into Cary's worldwide nonprofit organization Musack, which works with schools and communities around the world to support music education, especially through the purchasing of instruments for teachers and students that would otherwise not have the funds to do so. Along with its work on Nantucket, Musack has expanded to Appalachia, Haiti, Cuba, Alaska, Native American reservations in the Southwest and even Aboriginal communities in Australia.

"We just keep our ears open," Cary says. "Wherever there's need and somebody who digs rock-and-roll the way we do and is teaching and supporting kids to be able to share their voices with music, we come in and say, 'How can we support that?' It's so gratifying when you get that first video back from a kid who's just learned, like, 'Combat Rock.' Then you go, 'Well, what if 100 kids were doing that? Why not 1,000?'"

Musack is just one of the many programs across the country that are working to strengthen communities through musical education, including Tipitina's Foundation's Instruments a Comin', fellow New Orleans organization Roots of Music, The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation, Hungry For Music, Vega Productions and more, along with the various music education grants given out by the Phish-inspired Mockingbird Foundation.

This year, Cary will host the eighth iteration of his annual one-day music and comedy festival—which he puts on in his LA backyard—in continued efforts to raise money for Musack and the nonprofit's expanding endeavors. Yet, even as the organization grows, Cary and company are sticking to their main objective of empowering students through music, drawing on the famous words that Woody Guthrie's once displayed on his guitar—"This Machine Kills Fascists"—but with a personal spin.

"Whenever we give anyone a set of drums or a guitar or keyboard, we give them a sticker that says, 'This Machine:' and they can write in whatever they need that machine to do for them," Cary says. "Some of the kids in Alaska wrote, 'This Machine Melts Ice,' and other kids have written, 'This Machine Makes This Girl Like Me' or 'This Machine Kicks Ass.' That's our goal. We want to give them a voice and a musical machine to fix something." ***Matt Inman***

A Lot Artist Earns His Merit Badge: **Chris Kovach**

For Chris Kovach, whose creative vision has enabled him to work with numerous artists and festivals over the years—including Fare Thee Well, Newport Folk, Newport Jazz, Coachella, Lockn', the recent Bobby and Phil shows, moe. and Umphrey's McGee—it all goes back to his days as a fan, trying to support himself on tour.

"I started selling T-shirts on the Phish lot in 1993-1994," he recalls. "I was just out of college and I did really well. And, by that, I mean I made enough money to go to as many Phish shows as I wanted to. I worked with Amy Skelton, who ran their merch and made sure that my shirts were cool and didn't violate anything. Then, right after Jerry died in '95, she came to me and said, 'I can't let you sell shirts any more. We can't have the whole Grateful Dead lot scene hop onto Phish.' And I said, 'It was always about the music for me. I'll stop selling shirts immediately.'"

However, just as he began to re-orient his creative energies, Kovach received another call from Phish, this time soliciting his input for T-shirt ideas. One of his concepts was selected for the group's 1995 New Year's Eve run, kicking off a relationship that continues to this day. "I started working for them designing and producing T-shirts, and later made limited edition stuff like merit badges and pennants and coins. I typically work with them on the niche-ier stuff that appeals to more of the hardcore fans. Since I am a big Phish fan myself, I just make the stuff I'd want to buy."

In the late-'90s, he started a streetwear brand called Nucleus and landed his clothing line in stores like Urban Outfitters and Zumiez. Ultimately, he sold that business in order to focus on the music realm. And, despite his success and close proximity to many of his favorite acts, it's still about the music for Kovach. "I started to shiver and my knees buckled a little bit," he says of his reaction to hearing that Trey Anastasio was going to join the "Core Four" at Fare Thee Well. "That was just such a thrill for me as a fan." ***Dean Budnick***

Golden Year: **New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival turns 50**

When the 2019 edition of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival kicks off on April 26, this will mark the 50th year of the venerable event. It is one of the few festivals that maintains both a local identity and an international scope. Although the festival debuted in 1970, founder George Wein was first approached eight years earlier, following his success creating the Newport Jazz Festival in 1954 and Newport Folk Festival in 1959.

Wein recalls:

It started in 1962. Because of my reputation with the Newport Jazz Festival, I was asked by a community board—consisting of the hotel association, the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade for the City of New Orleans—to come and produce its own jazz festival in the style of Newport.

1962 was too early. Jim Crow laws still ruled the roost in the South. The laws of segregation made it impossible to present international musicians of mixed cultural backgrounds.

After many stops and starts, I was given a contract to produce the first New Orleans Jazz Festival

Douglas Mason (Wein and Davis)

Taj Mahal

Jay Blakesberg

and Louisiana Heritage Fair in 1970. I chose this title after having the privilege of spending the '60s working with Pete Seeger on the Newport Folk Festival–famous for Bob Dylan going electric.

In coming to New Orleans since 1962, I had become totally aware of the phenomenal local culture of food, crafts and music that had a daily expression in the lives of New Orleanians. Instead of doing just a jazz festival, I utilized my experience in working with both folk and jazz music in Newport.

I needed to build a local team and found a young man named Quint Davis. Little did I know that this 21-year-old kid would become one of the great producers in the history of American music.

The 1970 festival was held in Beauregard Square–now Congo Square–and drew a crowd of less than 300 people. But the formula of multiple stages, and food and crafts booths still exists today and draws hundreds of thousands of people every year to the Crescent City.

Why is the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival (NOJHF) a continuous success? The city is a destination in itself. People from around the world want to come to New Orleans. This great festival wraps into one package–the food, crafts and totality of music found in New Orleans and Louisiana.

I was completely involved in producing this festival in its infancy but, slowly, Quint Davis has made his personality and talent synonymous with what is the NOJHF. As long as there is the City of New Orleans, there will always be a New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.

Quint Davis, the event's producer and director, as well as CEO of Festival Productions Inc.–New Orleans, shares his own perspective:

George Wein is a visionary. That first year, he had brought down Mahalia Jackson and Duke Ellington, and he had commissioned Duke to do the "New Orleans Suite." And he told them: "You've gotta come out to this little heritage fair during the day." There was a little tent top down in Congo Square with an upright piano in the grass, not even a stage, and gospel singers were playing there. There were four little outdoor stages that had Cajun and zydeco and Professor Longhair and Snooks Eaglin playing blues and a little food and a little crafts. And then we had the Eureka Brass Band doing jazz funerals and it was the first place the Mardi Gras Indians ever appeared.

Mahalia is from New Orleans; she's from the Pearl Street area by the levy, so that was a sensation. She was standing in the middle and the Eureka Brass Band, which is the birthright of jazz, was proceeding around her. Then they stopped and started playing "Closer Walk with Thee," and she started singing it with them. So now you have the world's greatest gospel singer, maybe ever, from New Orleans who's singing a gospel hymn with a marching funeral brass band. And we've never gotten away from that. The festival is big now, but it still has that same palette.

We have 5,000 musicians playing 13 stages over seven days, and maybe 800 of them are not local. Basically what happens is, now that it's grown to this point, on each day a given stage will have one guest that we want to be the greatest living exponent of that genre. And then all the rest of the artists are from here. I think the musicianship, the playing and the singing on our stages hour-to-hour, within our genres, is unequalled. But go around the field–we probably have a thousand gospel singers, alone. We have a gospel tent, a blues tent, three stages with jazz on them–contemporary, traditional second line and traditional New Orleans jazz–a Cajun zydeco stage, R&B, funk, Caribbean, African and Latin.

People sometimes think that heritage is about looking in the rearview mirror, which it is, but you've gotta look through the windshield too. It moves in both directions. So at the same time that you define and live in the history that you're celebrating, you're also looking forward toward what's next. So you have Ellis Marsalis and then Wynton Marsalis and then Terence Blanchard and then Nicholas Payton. Look at the brass bands, where you went from the traditional Olympia Brass Band to the Dirty Dozen, who took it to a different place. And then after the Dirty Dozen you had Rebirth, who took it to yet another place. And now we have thirty brass bands that play the festival. A lot of them are young and they're playing brass-hop, they're playing Marvin Gaye songs in the street–which doesn't mean they can't play traditional as well. Our culture not only endures but it's exploding, it's also growing. This is a golden era.

And don't forget the food! I don't think there's food at a festival like this one. We're churning out hundreds of thousands of servings of gourmet food for 10 bucks on a paper plate in a field. And I mean pheasant quail, andouille gumbo, soft-shell crab on a buttered bun, crab meat po'boys, trout baquet, crawfish strudel.

This festival has always been handmade and it's still handmade. We have a crew that builds the stages, we have a crew that builds the food booths, we have an electrical crew that does all the electrical, we have trailer crews that go in and put in the plumbing and everything, and all the signs are hand-painted and hand-drawn–Nan the sign lady is a famous historical figure because she does every sign by hand every year. That's been important for us as well. Even though it gets bigger, we try to stay grounded in our structure and our operation.

Of course, the people who attend, are the ones who make the festival. Without them, we're putting on the world's greatest soundcheck. They've been coming for 50 years–that's three generations. People have moved here and got married because of the festival. The music is woven into their lives, which happens to people in general and a little more so here in New Orleans. **Dean Budnick**

The Real Thing: **Taj Mahal**

Harlem-born singer, multi-instrumentalist and composer Henry Saint Clair Fredericks Jr. made a bold move in taking his unforgettable stage name from a magnificent 17th century Indian holy structure, but it was also a conscious decision to convey himself as something to behold, a true wonder. Like the original, Taj Mahal projects an image of dignity and awe even while keeping it all as real as real gets.

For more than half a century now, Taj Mahal has continued to radiate a rare authenticity in an increasingly less authentic world. Whatever he undertakes–when he sings the blues, reggae or when he delves into the music of Hawaii, the Caribbean or Africa–he throws his entire being into it, embodying its essence. From his self-titled debut album in 1968 to his Grammy-winning 2017 collaboration with disciple Keb' Mo'–appropriately titled *TajMo*–Taj Mahal has always been an explorer, a pursuer of the genuine. Many other survivors of the era in which he came up have long since left their roots behind, but Taj Mahal has never tired of digging deeper at the source, never hesitating to turn down another road to investigate what lies ahead.

Wherever he has gone, the blues has never been far away–it's at the core of who he is. Even in his earliest days, with the Rising Sons–a band that included kindred spirit Ry Cooder and should've but didn't make the big time–Taj was on to something new while mining his beloved traditional American roots music. He came into his own on his first albums for Columbia, among them the gutsy, self-explanatory *The Natch'l Blues* from 1968, the same year he was invited to take part in the historic concert film *The Rolling Stones Rock and Roll Circus*. Singing the Sleepy John Estes blues "Leavin' Trunk" on that program, surrounded by A-level musicians, including guitarist Jesse Ed Davis, Mahal blew harp and sang and quickly found love among the rock-and-rollers craving the rawness and honesty he offered. As he found his way onto multi-bill gigs at emerging shrines like the Fillmores West and East, he soon rose from opening act to headliner.

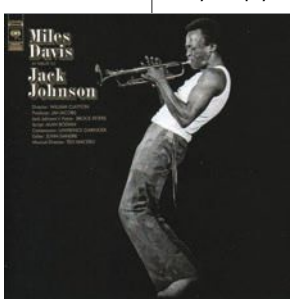
By 1971, when he recorded a live album at the latter, *The Real Thing*, he'd already changed gears, performing his show with a stunning new band that included no less than four tuba players. Taj left Columbia for Warner Bros. during the second half of the decade, and other labels have come and gone, but his musical wanderlust only intensified with each passing year: Mahal habitually branched out, applying the same boundless curiosity whether he probed Indian music (1995's *Mumtaz Mahal*), Malian grooves (1999's *Kulanjan*, with kora player Toumani Diabaté) or gospel (2014's *Talkin' Christmas!*, with the Blind Boys of Alabama).

That he continues to find colleagues who are enthusiastic to join him in the studio is a testament to Mahal's influence. His 2008 *Maestro* album features a long list of guests including Los Lobos, Ben Harper and Ziggy Marley, while the aforementioned *TajMo* collaboration features appearances by fellow blues mavens Bonnie Raitt, Joe Walsh, Sheila E. and others. During the past few years, he's sat in with friends like the Stones, Eric Clapton and the Allman Brothers Band, all of whom continued to treasure his authenticity.

Taj Mahal, at age 76, remains totally committed to that quality he defined as "The Real Thing" many decades ago. Like the shrine from which he took his name, he continues to dazzle and inspire reverence.
Jeff Tamarkin

Miles Gets Raucous: *A Tribute To Jack Johnson*

Over the course of his extraordinary career, Miles Davis not only steadily reinvented himself but also reinvented jazz. His studio highlights from *Birth of Cool* to *Milestones*, *Kind of Blue*, *Sketches of Spain*, *Miles Smiles*, *In a Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew* demonstrate an artist perpetually challenging both himself and his listeners. One record that is somewhat lost to history is 1971's *Jack Johnson* (later retitled *A Tribute To Jack Johnson*), which finds Davis embracing a true rock aesthetic for the first time in his career.



The album is quite a juxtaposition from the previous year's *Bitches Brew*, a touchstone of fusion. However, not content to rest on his laurels (in fact seemingly not content to rest at all during this era), he followed it up with another innovative album, which consists of exactly two tracks: the 26:53 of "Right Off," followed by the 25:34 of "Yesternow."

Davis recorded *Jack Johnson* as the soundtrack to a documentary about the world's first African American heavyweight boxing champion, whose accomplishments and lifestyle resonated with Davis, as he explains in his liners. He closes these notes by stating "The music of this album speaks for itself. But dig the guitar and the bass—They are 'Far-in'—and so is the producer Teo Macero."

The record opens with said bassist, Michael Henderson, contributing a burbling groove alongside drummer Billy Cobham before guitarist John McLaughlin blasts a bracing solo that prompted Davis to run into the studio from the control room—where he had been briefly stationed—to contribute his own strident response. The record is by turns exhilarating and meditative.

Producer Macero sculpted the results, drawing on a series of freewheeling performances by a collective that also included Herbie Hancock and Steve Grossman for most of the sessions, as well as Chick Corea, Dave Holland, Sonny Sharrock and Jack DeJohnette. (2003's *The Complete Jack Johnson Sessions*, which showcases the improvisatory nature of their efforts, complements the album and also underscores Macero's contribution in shaping the final release.)

When asked about being described as "Far-in" McLaughlin recalls, "I took it as a compliment, of course. The '60s was such a fertile decade where you had people going out toward the more arrhythmic kind of music. Sometimes they called it free jazz, but it wasn't free of rhythm. Listen to some of the latter recordings of Coltrane with Rashied Ali—the pulse is definitely there, but it's much more subtle. But some music was just completely arrhythmic and I never went for that. I like to be inside the rhythm and Miles had the most marvelous sense of rhythm—just impeccable. It's an even greater compliment that he told me and a number of other people that *Jack Johnson* was his all-time favorite record. That hit me very deeply because of the recording process itself. Normally, when Miles would come into the studio, he'd be carrying a coffee in a brown paper bag and, in the taxi, he had taken the paper bag and scribbled some chords. We'd play around those chords and that's how the session got going. Only with *Jack Johnson*, he didn't even have any paper bags; he didn't have anything.

"The first time I met Billy Cobham was in the studio," he continues. "Miles was busy in the control room with Teo Macero and we had time in the studio. I started a jam in E, just for fun. Billy joined in, then Michael Henderson started playing bass, and we took off! Within a minute, Miles ran in with his horn and went on to play in a way I'd never heard before. Unbelievable! Years later, I found out that Miles would say to people that this was his favorite recording. One of the reasons he really liked that record was because it didn't come from his direction—it just came about. The fact that he cited it as an all-time favorite just warmed my heart. But I disagree with him. *Milestones* was the first milestone in my life because that's where I first discovered Miles and this new school, and *Kind of Blue* put the cap on it." ***Dean Budnick***

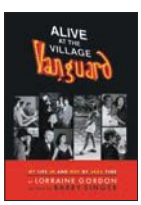
Check Them Out: **Star-Making Machinery and Alive at the Village Vanguard**

Here are a couple books that may be a challenge to locate but are certainly worth your time and attention. So stop by your local library and find yourself a copy of each.

Geoffrey Stokes: Star-Making Machinery: Inside The Business of Rock and Roll

In *Star-Making Machinery*, Stokes, a longtime *Village Voice* staffer who died in 1995, is granted unparalleled access behind the scenes as Warner Brothers prepares to release Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen's 1975 self-titled album. Stokes paints a vivid portrait of the label's struggle to produce a top-selling record from the eclectic group. The Airmen, who were hailed for their animated live shows, had achieved unanticipated success in 1971 with a top 10 cover of "Hot Rod Lincoln." It's a fascinating study that paved the way for other notable music industry treatments in such books as Fred Goodman's *The Mansion on The Hill* and Fredric Dannen's *Hit Men* .

Lorraine Gordon as Told to Barry Singer: Alive at the Village Vanguard: My Life in and out of Jazz Time



Lorraine Gordon opens her breezy memoir by asking, "Where should I start? I loved jazz from the very beginning. As I write these words I am still very much the owner of the Village Vanguard, the oldest, and, if I do say so myself, the best damn jazz club, well...ever."

In *Alive at the Village Vanguard*, Gordon, a true pioneering figure, who passed away in June at age 95 and was named a "Jazz Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2013, shares her experiences as a jazz enthusiast and as a woman running a celebrated Manhattan venue (which her late husband Max had opened back in 1935). An even more comprehensive autobiography by a jazz entrepreneur (and pianist!) that may be easier to locate, is George Wein's wonderful, evocative *Myself Among Others: A Life in Music*.
Dean Budnick

Collective Uplift: **Participation Row**

After spending the last few years on tour with Dead & Company, Participation Row supervisor Whitt Bell knows a thing or two about improvising. In July, as Bell and his team set up Participation Row at Albuquerque, N.M.'s Isleta Amphitheater, intense desert winds gusted through the venue, making any type of paperwork impossible and throwing the social action village into chaos.

"We had to make a plan very quickly," he recalls. "We ended up going mobile with the whole thing. We had groups of volunteers, each with different causes, walk around the venue. It ended up working really well, and we turned a not-so-good situation into a successful night."

Conceived by the non-profit HeadCount and first held at Lockn' in 2013, Participation Row has acted as a meeting ground for nonprofits and music fans. Encapsulating charity auctions and grassroots activism, Participation Rowhas raised millions of dollars and empowered scores of local and national nonprofits during the past five years. Participation Row also counts Bob Weir as one of their adamant supporters. At Lockn' 2015, Weir played an autographed guitar onstage that was later auctioned off by Participation Row for $65,000. (The money raised was split among the 22 participating charities present on-site.) Weir also played a similar a charity guitar at Fare Thee Well in Chicago. It fetched a staggering $526,000, and Participation Row ensured that it was shared by their 17 Grateful Dead-affiliated charities.

On tour with a band like Dead & Company, Participation Row will set up rows of booths at each venue where fans can learn about worthy causes and engage in positive actions, which can range from signing up for voter alerts to writing a postcard for rainforest preservation. Additionally, Participation Row incentivizes fans by allowing them to trade positive actions for cool, exclusive merch. On Dead &

Participation Row

Jeff Kravitz (Phish)

Josh Kaufman and Annie Nero

Body/Head

Company tour, if a fan engages with three nonprofits, then they receive a free pin. This model has also been replicated on tour with acts like Lettuce. According to Bell, it's all about reaching out to music-lovers when they're already in a good mood.

"Just like the name suggests, what we're trying to get fans to do is participate," he says. "We're trying to bring some good not only into the concert space, but into the world." HeadCount, steady partners REVERB and new addition March For Our Lives led Participation Row Dead & Company tour this summe, and, in less than two months, enabled 22,000 positive actions and registered 6,396 voters.

"From the band's perspective, we want it to be more than entertainment," Dead & Company bassist Oteil Burbridge says. "We want our shows to be a spiritual uplift, an intellectual uplift and an emotional uplift. So when you have that many people packed in there, why not take it all the way?"

Burbridge has even stopped by Participation Row to "give moral support" to volunteers. Discussing the men and women who make Participation Row happen, the bassist notes that they are of "different ages, different races, different everything," but what they have in common is that they are all "a certain type of person on the inside." His wife Jess Burbridge has also been a part of Participation Row through her work with Gorilla Doctors, a wildlife conservation program based out of UC Davis.

"It's a very unique space and it's not something you'd usually see at a concert," Bell admits. "But the ultimate goal is to continue to bring it where it works best."

Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Post-Jam Power Couple: **Josh Kaufman and Annie Nero**

"It's not nepotism—I should be clear," says Josh Kaufman, explaining how he often recruits his wife and occasional bandmate, Annie Nero, as a session bassist or singer for the myriad projects he produces. "It's just that she's really, really good." The couple fell in love through music, collaborating in several bands—including the now-defunct, psych-rock act Yellowbirds—as they carved out career paths in the bustling Brooklyn indie scene starting in the early-2000s. "We moved to the city and our bands broke up, and we had to decide what to do," Nero says. "So, there were a lot of outside factors: Do we work on our relationship or our musical relationship? Ultimately, we did both."

Over the years, as they've raised their now-four-year-old daughter, they've become the connective tissue of the New York indie-rock world. Kaufman has played with, produced, arranged and written for artists like Josh Ritter, Interpol's Paul Banks, Joe Russo, The War on Drugs, Craig Finn and The National, the latter of whom recorded some of their early LPs using the couple's instruments. That National connection became a crucial post-jam gateway: The band enlisted Kaufman as musical director for "The Bridge Session," a massive ensemble performance featuring a mix of modern rock voices, along with the Grateful Dead's Bob Weir. From there, the multi-instrumentalist co-produced the sprawling 2016 all-star Dead tribute LP, *Day of the Dead*, and he signed on to helm *Blue Mountain*, Weir's first solo album in more than a decade and first all-original album in over three decades. For Kaufman, a lifelong Deadhead, collaborating with the guitarist up close was life-changing.

"I remember we were sitting at his house together, working on a song called 'Only a River,'" Kaufman says. "Bob made a suggestion, and I just disagreed with him for some reason and thought we should do it a different way. He paused for a second and looked at me and said, 'I have to be completely open-minded in this situation. I have to be able to accept this stuff; otherwise, this isn't going to work.' I was like, 'Wow, that's crazy. You're older than my dad,' and him being able to engage on that level so early in the process was amazing to me. He was creatively generous and ready to open up."

In addition to playing with The Bandana Splits, Nero has also worked with Weir, Finn and the members of The National and curates regular, often full-album all-star deep-dives celebrating artists like Willie Nelson, Dr. John, Talking Heads and John Perry Barlow at the Brooklyn, N.Y. clubhouse Threes Brewing. She admits that she only recently launched her journey into the Grateful Dead's catalog via her husband—and after hearing a memorable endorsement in the series finale of *Freaks and Geeks*. But Weir's generosity left a mark on her. "He never used his status for any leverage," Kaufman says. "He was never manipulative with it, and he was always willing to try things any which way, always ready and willing to be surprised by music—just for the adventure of it, in such a way that it was striking and weirdly felt like a lesson. I always thought I was pretty open-minded, and then I met him. His commitment to the moment is extraordinary." ***Ryan Reed***

Essential Punk Improvisation: **From No Wave to Neo Psychedelia**

When it comes to improvisation, my influences were really the No Wave music of the late-'70s and early-'80s, which was more of a rock hybrid and a little different then the jazz improv scene happening in the East Village at the time, with people like John Zorn. I was listening to bands like Barbara Ess, Glenn Branca and The Static, who played this free music—some of them would write these half-songs and then, improvise around them. And even when they had more of a song structure, the music they wrote was very free and had the energy of punk without being condensed into three chords.

But when it comes to influential psychedelic music for me, I must mention coming across this live 1968 Syd Barrett Pink Floyd-era video. Syd was basically sitting down playing an acoustic guitar like [Body/Head guitarist] Bill Nance, and everyone was out of their minds on drugs. There was hardly any drumming, just these very light sections in the background, and it felt like everyone in the room was dancing to a light show**.** *Kim Gordon*

Further listening by Bill Nance of Body/Head:

Jana Rush–*Pariah* (Objects Limited)

Gunn-Truscinski Duo–*Bay Head* (Three Lobed)

Vince Staples–*Big Fish Theory* (Def Jam)

Okkyung Lee–*Dahl-Tah-Ghi* (Pica Disk)

Ellen Arkbro–*For Organ and Brass* (Subtext)

David Fair–*Ballets* (Feeding Tube)

Aaron Dilloway–*Switches* (Cejero)

Traxman–*Tekvision* (Teklife)

Ragnar Johnson–*Crying Bamboos: Ceremonial Flute Music From New Guinea Madang* (Editions Mego)

Circuit des Yeux–*Reaching for Indig* (Drag City)

Silver Screen Soundtracks: *Cinema Improv*

As the booming world of podcasts continues to expand, there's hardly anything that a listener can't find in the genre, and many creatives are looking to push the envelope in terms of what should constitute a podcast. Drummer David Butler certainly lands in that category with *Cinema Improv*. What started as a simple jam session in his Brooklyn studio turned into a unique, new idea: Butler began to invite a wide range of musicians to join him in watching a movie on silent and improvise a full soundtrack, without any preparation.

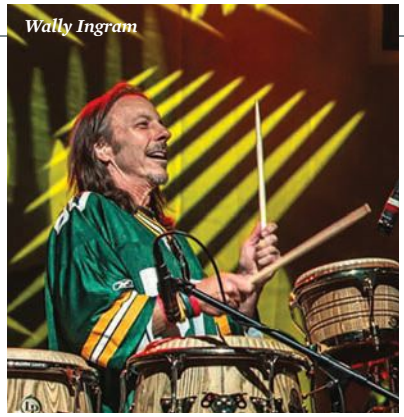
"I had invited some people over for a little jam, and it was super cinematic," Butler says of that first session, explaining how a subsequent conversation led to the idea of using film visuals to bring out more of that feeling in the music. "I started asking around for movie ideas and amassed this big list of visually amazing movies that didn't have much dialogue. Then, I got a projector and floated the idea to a bunch of musicians, and most of them seemed super into it."

Butler's *Cinema Improv* celebrated its one-year anniversary this past July, with an episode that found Sinkane guitarist and bassist Michael Ish Montgomery, as well as Philip Mayer of the Tony Award-winning musical *The Band's Visit***,** improvising over the classic Indiana Jones flick *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

"That's the lucky part, for me," Butler says. "I get to do all of them." The drummer, who tours with Guster and Marco Benevento while playing with various musicians around New York City, sits behind his kit for

Josh Wool (Cook), Jay Blakesberg

Dave Butler


Wally Ingram

each podcast recording, then later revisits the improvisation to cut it down to roughly the length of an LP.

"There are always these lulls and boring parts where we just stop playing and watch the movie a bit," Butler explains. "Normally, you would just stop or play another song or take a break or whatever, but the cool thing about these sessions is that, pretty much every time, the most inspired, interesting stuff comes after those boring parts—you push through the mud and then, all of the sudden, you're playing this stuff you would never play."

So far, some of Butler's *Cinema Improv* guests have included singer-songwriter Jamie McLean, Josh Kaufman, Darkside's Dave Harrington, Leftover Salmon/Fat Mama keyboardist Erik Deutsch, Railroad Earth bassist Andrew Altman, Cage the Elephant guitarist Nick Bockrath and Joe Russo's Almost Dead/WOLF! guitarist Scott Metzger jamming to movies like *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Gravity*, *Samsara*, *Enter the Void* and *Once Upon a Time in the West*.

Eventually, Butler is hoping to take the podcast to live audiences. "Every one of these groups that I've had are amazing bands that could do a gig on their own, so I have to do that," he says, noting that he'd also like to get some of his more steady collaborators into the *Cinema Improv* studio, including Benevento and the members of Guster, Gatos Blancos and Drewcifer, which features musicians from Railroad Earth and The Infamous Stringdusters. But the key is keeping the lineups—and the movies—engaging, and always changing.

"I try and come up with interesting combinations, where maybe the guys haven't met," Butler says. "This is an interesting way for them to meet for the first time—you're thrown into this situation, but it's not intense like a gig. You get to sit back and watch a movie, and it really leads to some cool music." ***Matt Inman***

Everybody's Support System: **Wally Ingram**

Awhile back, one of Wally Ingram's friends came up with an idea for a nifty T-shirt slogan: "Just Add Wally." "I've played with a lot of singer-songwriters who have their acoustic guitar and I'll stand behind them or sit on a djembe, just trying to support the song and make it sound like there are two, three or four people behind us when there are just two of us," he says on a warm summer day from his Hollywood, Calif.-based Wally Trax studio before an afternoon session. "I don't get in the way of the vocals. I just try to be a great support system and help translate the song. I've carved my niche as a journeyman sideman doing that."

The Wisconsin-bred percussionist first made his name playing in the Grammy-nominated Madison, Wis.-based New Wave group Timbuk3 from 1986-1995, but has since grown into a self-described Kevin Bacon-like figure, augmenting Sheryl Crow, Eric Burdon, Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, Steve Kimock, Anders Osborne and, especially, David Lindley. Recently, Ingram has also brought his signature touch to the Grateful Dead catalog, backing Bob Weir and Phil Lesh on their stripped-down duo tour this past March. Ingram, a cancer survivor, first bonded with Weir on the benefit circuit and, when the Dead co-founders were looking to flesh out their arrangements with some light percussion, they brought Ingram in for a rehearsal-style audition. With a constantly changing setlist and minimal time to practice with his new collaborators, Ingram jumped headfirst into their 300-song repertoire, often cramming by pulling up different takes on Spotify and other streaming platforms backstage each night. "One of the only directives I was told was: 'Play as if there's already another drummer playing,'" he says. "What that means is: Don't focus so much on laying down the kicksnare standard-groove-system and think more about playing around that with accents and colors."

Ingram says that Weir would sometimes instruct him to "check out this '88 version" and keyboardist Jeff Chimenti would offer his advice to "revisit some recent RatDog or Dead & Company versions to hear how this stuff's going," but in order to keep in line with Lesh's approach, he would also go back to a song's original recording or a classic '70s take.

The shows were a complete success, even pulling in guests like Trey Anastasio, Larry Campbell and Teresa Williams, and Ingram has continued to explore the Dead canon. In June, he returned to East Troy, Wis.'s Alpine Valley, his local childhood shed, to join the Little Feat/Dead offshoot Dead Feat and, in July, he played drums in The Ramblin Roses, featuring Papa Mali, Reed Mathis and Todd Stoops.

He's continued to work with Weir behind the scenes, too. "We've been doing some rehearsing and preparation for whatever might follow with what is essentially a Bob Weir trio featuring a bass player named Paul Ill. We've done a couple of private events and are cultivating something that Bobby can do in a trio dynamic—a small group for different appropriate events."

For a number of years, the percussionist also showed off his improvisational chops with Stockholm Syndrome, a hard-rock jamband supergroup featuring Jerry Joseph, Widespread Panic bassist Dave Schools, guitarist Eric McFadden, German keyboardist Danny Dziuk and Dziuk's replacement, Gov't Mule's Danny Louis. Though the band has been inactive since 2011, Ingram is currently working with McFadden on an album of reworked songs from their *Alektorophobia* sessions featuring Les Claypool and Nils Frahm. He isn't completely ruling out a proper reunion either.

"Stockholm Syndrome is one of those bands where enough time goes by and someone might say, 'What would it take to do a reunion,'" he says. "There's some big personalities there, and getting that group on the road scheduling-wise is a little tough, but I can see any number of combinations happening. Dave has produced Jerry's albums—and I am on one—and people have thrown ideas out there for different things, like getting a lineup together with Schools, Jerry and me. It's a loud band, but I would love to do an acoustic version."

And, despite already being the connector between numerous jam-fueled scenes, he freely admits that his time at Dead Camp is far from over. "I feel like I'm in this for a lifetime of cultivation," he says, equating the pursuit to studying jazz. "It's a great thing to always have on your mind. I want to keep gathering knowledge and cultivating."

Mike Greenhaus

Closing in on the Earth: **Fall '98 Phish**

When Mike Gordon put together a discography for his website a number of years ago, he only listed one Phish LP: *The Story of the Ghost*. He was kidding around, of course, but he was also saying something about why that particular studio album always felt so special: Released shortly before Halloween 1998 and built from a series of full-on group jams, *Ghost* captures Phish at their most egalitarian and collaborative.

The four musicians had written together before—most recently, a series of fun songs about their friends and a studio-experiment known as the "The Blob" that was largely shelved in favor of what became their crossover *Billy Breathes*—but the *Ghost* sessions were Phish's first real attempt to slip away from their rapidly rising popularity and simply create. The Vermont Quartet holed up at Bearsville Studios outside Woodstock, and like Dylan and The Band before them, lost themselves in the ether, birthing future live chestnuts like "Birds of a Feather" and "The Moma Dance," quirky favorites such as "Roggae" and "Meat," and a number of deep-album cuts spiced with poetry entries from longtime lyricist Tom Marshall's *The Salamander Prince* musings. Those numbers, as well the Trey Anastasio/Marshall tunes that filled out the collection, documented the new, Talking Heads-influenced grooves that pushed Phish away from their early classic-rock heroes and jazz-indebted sound, and toward the Cow Funk style they adopted in late 1997.

Yet, by the time *Ghost* hit stores—accompanied by what was at the time a big media blitz for the band—their sound had already started to take on a darker, more ambient hue that nodded to their deep dives into the work of Brian Eno and Robert Fripp, Anastasio's love of Pavement and the loose, punky swagger of their 1998 Halloween cover, The Velvet Underground's *Loaded*. The boundaries of what type of music could, and should, serve as the launching pad for jamband rock were also rapidly expanding in the post-Grateful Dead world to include elements of acid-jazz, electronica, funk, indie-rock and the post-rock textures and instrumental vignettes that would eventually surface as *Ghost*'s counterpart, *The Siket Disc*.

There were some stormy times ahead, but Phish was still clearly having fun throughout the fall of 1998, whether it was a pair of acoustic sets at the Bridge School Benefit Concert, garage-rock jams with Neil Young at Farm Aid, a surprise "you snooze, you lose" recreation of *The*

'98 Phish

Dark Side of the Moon in Utah, the cover and antic filled shows that would comprise *Hampton Comes Alive*, some "Mirror in the Bathroom" segues in Worcester, Mass., or their now-cherished take on Prince's "1999" at Madison Square Garden.

Marshall recently described Phish's iconic New Year's '99-'00 Big Cypress festival and last summer's Baker's Dozen run as "twin peaks" hovering over the band's mountain range of accomplishments. In certain ways, Phish left base camp for their ascent after '98, utilizing their Barn oasis more and more, shifting the onstage configuration that they had kept the same since their club days, ushering in a new wave of songs road-tested with their side-projects and achieving a cultural prominence appropriate for a defining band of their generation.

Twenty years removed, the closeness of those recordings, enhanced by Andy Wallace's expert mix, feels that much more intimate, especially on *Ghost*'s short, sweet coda "End of Session," which the band finally played live during the Baker's Dozen "Jam night" in 2017.

"*The Story of the Ghost* recording was such a great hang; we jammed for days together trying to get that loose feel," Anastasio says. "'End of Session' felt like the perfect ending to the album, summing up the feeling of closing in on the earth again after being in flight for weeks. We were all completely floored when the Boredoms covered it but, for some reason, it took us till the Baker's Dozen to try playing it ourselves."

Mike Greenhaus

Man of the People: **Phil Cook**

A few months back, Phil Cook was sitting with his brother Brad Cook and Justin Vernon in the latter's studio just outside of Eau Claire, Wis., cracking into a bottle of fine whiskey and some really beautiful sativa and listening to their teenage friendship play through the speakers.

The former members of beloved early 2000s band DeYarmond Edison hadn't caught up in a bit. There was incalculable news to share. Vernon's Bon Iver remains one of indie-rock's finest enigmas; Brad is now an in-demand producer, player and manager; and Phil has just wrapped his second solo record (not counting his 2011 instrumental album *Hungry Mother Blues*), *People Are My Drug*. "We created this tribe back then, shining a light onto each other's dark path of adolescence," says Phil Cook, who continued to play music with Brad in Megafaun for years after DeYarmond Edison parted ways. "I'm so grateful to look back on the people I learned to play music with."

The importance of a tight community never left Phil—and the theme is front and center on *People Are My Drug*, a warm, worn-in collection of gospel-infused, roots-rock and folk-blues tunes. Phil's journey from bandmate to frontman was a long one: his solo debut, 2015's *Southland Mission*, arrived nearly two decades after he first stepped onstage and, in addition to his steady post in Hiss Golden Messenger, he has recently played with the Indigo Girls' Amy Ray, Matthew E. White, The Blind Boys of Alabama and many others.

A marathon of collaborations around 2013, "Opened up my brain and heart to the possibilities that maybe I could also run in the pack," says Phil, "That I had my own things to say and contribute to the canon of American musical expression."

With the help of his touring band, he recorded *People Are My Drug* front to back in 10 days, split between Vernon's studio and Brad's backyard shed in North Carolina. "We came in with confidence, and played from the gut, full of feeling," says Phil.

People Are My Drug is a more sober take on the summer BBQ soul of *Southland Mission*. Its centerpiece is "Another Mother's Son," a meditation on police brutality, featuring the lyrics, "Police man let his pistol free/ and the poet ran to write a eulogy... But only mama, she holds all that silence."

"[Parenthood] to me is the biggest window of empathy and growth," says Phil. "The problem will never be solved unless our society, especially the silent, white, sympathetic majority, are ready to break their silence. We need to see ourselves in any mother, in any family."

"We chose to raise our kids in a community with strong, female leaders and people of color," he continues, noting his adopted home of Durham, N.C. "I want my kids to know the beauty of a garden with more than one kind of flower."

The album—nine tracks of living, breathing, deeply human, Southern soul—finds Phil embracing his surroundings with lyrics of unity and compassion.

But the magic he's felt out of the spotlight has never left him.

"So often, nowadays, I suddenly find myself onstage playing with someone I respect," he says. "If I'm not pinching myself at least once a year, I've lost something."

Justin Jacobs

Phil Cook

Derek Featherstone

Sonic Drive: **Derek Featherstone and UltraSound**

The second day of this past summer's Dead & Company tour also represented a first for the band's front of house audio engineer Derek Featherstone. While he was in the midst of a line check at the venue before the show, his lawyers were closing a deal that would enable him to become CEO of UltraSound, the California-based sound provider where he had been employed for the previous 30 years.

Featherstone, who grew up in New Jersey, began working on production for school plays in the sixth grade. When he was 18, he relocated to Northern California and during a 12-month stint while he established the in-state residency that would allow him to attend UC Berkeley at a reduced rate, he connected with some local bands. Then, while still an undergrad, he took to road with The Looters, a politically charged reggae-funk collective, who were starting to gain an international following. He ended up graduating from college as an English major—the quickest path to a degree, even though his initial studies were in engineering and physics—and started the next phase of his career at UltraSound.

Over the years to follow, he traveled with Primus, Tracy Chapman and Dave Matthews Band, while also running sound for a series of one-off clients. Featherstone eventually took on duties for the Grateful Dead's family of bands and will continue in this role for the foreseeable future. However, a new opportunity presented itself in 2017 when UltraSound owner Drew Serb decided to retire, enabling Featherstone and fellow industry vet Ralph Mastrangelo to purchase the enterprise. (Mastrangelo will serve as COO.)

Moving forward, they will continue to take inspiration from Dead & Company, which decided–just a few days before the close of summer tour–to switch Oteil Burbridge and Jeff Chimenti's spots on stage in order to facilitate musical connections, which necessitated some nimble thinking by the crew.

Featherstone acknowledges, "That's one of the reasons I stay working with these guys. It's a crazy environment, it's complicated, but they have a similar drive to make it better every day." ***Dean Budnick***

A Half-Century of *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*: **A Mini-Byrds Reunion**

The Byrds' *Sweetheart of the Rodeo*, one of the Rock and Roll Hall of Famers' most beloved recordings, almost didn't happen–the original intent of group leader Roger McGuinn had been to embark on a much more ambitious project. "It was going to go from early music through Baroque and into Appalachian," remembers the singer/guitarist. "Then it would go into how Celtic music came over to America and became distilled in the mountains, became country music, and how R&B started and then rock-and-roll. It would then go out through the synthesizer thing and space music. It was just a wild idea and I couldn't get anybody to go along with it."

When that concept imploded, an even more radical idea for the group's sixth studio release popped up–how about a country album? Although the idea of fusing country and rock wasn't completely alien (think The Beatles' "Act Naturally" and "Honey Don't"), no major band had devoted an entire album to exploring the juncture. What emerged, in the summer of 1968, was an album that initially sputtered commercially–it was too far ahead of its time–but is considered so influential today that it kick-started an entire genre.

Now, 50 years later, McGuinn and fellow founding Byrd Chris Hillman, joined by Marty Stuart and His Fabulous Superlatives, will embark on a multicity U.S. tour performing, for the first time, the entire *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* album from start to finish. The shows also mark the first large-scale collaboration between McGuinn and Hillman in years.

"*Sweetheart of the Rodeo* opened a vast floodgate for West Coast country-rock," says multi-instrumentalist/singer Hillman. "It was *Sweetheart* that led to the Eagles, Poco and a number of other things. The legacy of *Sweetheart of the Rodeo* probably surpassed a lot of the other Byrds projects."

Roger McGuinn, Chris Hillman, Marty Stuart and their Superlatives

Curtis George and his New Year's surprise

The album arose out of a somewhat chaotic situation. By 1968, three founding members of the Byrds–Gene Clark, Michael Clarke and David Crosby–had vacated the band, leaving only McGuinn and Hillman. They added drummer Kevin Kelley, Hillman's cousin, but still felt they needed another voice. Enter Gram Parsons, a young multi-instrumentalist, singer and songwriter who'd made some moderate waves with the International Submarine Band. Parsons was originally brought in simply to play piano (which he did on the album, as well as guitar), but his enthusiasm for country music fired up McGuinn and Hillman, who were also fans.

"We were doing country as far back as 'Satisfied Mind' on the [1965] *Turn! Turn! Turn!* album," says McGuinn. "And some of the stuff Chris had come up with–'Old John Robertson,' 'Girl With No Name,' 'Time Between'–was very country-ish."

The now-four-piece Byrds set off for Nashville and began recording the album with producer Gary Usher and some top local session musicians, before finishing the LP in Los Angeles. Future Byrds guitarist Clarence White, multi-stringman John Hartford and other aces were among those who helped flesh out the tracks, which included two new Dylan covers, "You Ain't Goin' Nowhere" (the first single) and "Nothing Was Delivered," as well as tunes penned by Merle Haggard, Woody Guthrie, the Louvin Brothers and others. Parsons contributed two of his own compositions as well as one written with Bob Buchanan and all three principal members shared lead vocals.

Sweetheart only peaked at No. 77 in *Billboard* after its release–The Byrds' lowest performance to that time–due largely to radio's inability to slot it into a category. "It was so out of left field that it wasn't a big seller," says Hillman. "But it left an incredible legacy."

"Country people didn't like it and rock people didn't like it. It just fell through the cracks," McGuinn agrees. "And then gradually, after 40 years, people kind of caught on to it and said, 'Hey, this wasn't bad at all.'"

Now, the *Sweetheart* shows are selling out. "I'm surprised, really," says McGuinn. "I thought we'd just do a couple and be done with it. But people are asking for more." ***Jeff Tamarkin***

The Unsung Hero of WSP's Internet Archive: **PanicStream**

When he's not at his day job as an athletic trainer, Curtis George moonlights as one of Widespread Panic's most recognizable fans. He is the sole founder, owner and operator of PanicStream.com, the premier archival destination for all things WSP. "If I'm home, I am working on PanicStream in some form," he laughs. And while the numbers flex depending on the band's touring cycle, PanicStream can garner over 800,000 unique visitors and 17 million page views annually. If you're a Spreadhead and you're looking for last night's setlist, a stream of your favorite show or just a conversation with fellow fans, PanicStream.com is your one-stop shop.

"It's about the community. I love this band. I love the music," George explains. "And I decided to stay true to that aspect. I feel like I'm contributing something for the benefit of others." He also adds that despite some tempting offers, he has never allowed third-party advertising on PanicStream. Instead, George pays for the site's upkeep through merch sales, donations and, many times, his own savings.

In late 2017, with the site in the red and Panic opting for fewer tour dates, he was nervous that PanicStream would fold. However, the fans he served so honorably had other plans. During a setbreak at Widespread Panic's recent New Year's Eve show in Atlanta, as George stared at his phone–updating setlists and monitoring the website–the venue shined a spotlight on him and he was presented with a check for $20,000, raised exclusively by thousands of PanicStream users who believe in what he was doing. "It absolutely blew me away," George recalls, getting choked up. "I was speechless. I'm a fan, and I'm used to being behind the scenes. In my career as an athletic trainer, I'm used to being on the sidelines. Then on that night, I was really in the spotlight."

For the foreseeable future, it seems that PanicStream is alive and well. George continues to spend every Widespread Panic show tuned into the virtual world he has built. (By now his friends and family know to check WSP's touring schedule before inviting him anywhere.) And he's still shocked when he sees people like percussionist Sunny Ortiz wearing PanicStream merch, or when he catches a glimpse of someone in the crowd checking out the site on their phone. After all, he still remembers the days when PanicStream had three users. Now it's entering its 13th year as the web's number one Spreadhead archive. There's even a smartphone app on the way.

"I'm insanely proud of what the site has become," he gushes. "There was never a plan, it just kept expanding and rolling. You can see the impact on the fanbase, and it's just incredible. It blows me away. I don't have any kids, but I think this is how a proud parent feels when their child does something good." ***Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta***

Still Bulletproof: **Antibalas**

On May 26, 1998, saxophonist Martín Perna put together Conjunto Antibalas for a poetry-night set at St. Nicks Pub in the Harlem.

Alysse Gafkjen (Sweetheart), Joshua

Two decades later, Antibalas–"bulletproof" in Spanish–have grown into Afrobeat's defining American voice, both introducing a new generation of festivalgoers to Fela Kuti's politically charged sound and turning the genre on its head with their own, highly improvisational modern approach. Together and individually, the members of the Afrobeat orchestra were part of the Broadway musical *Fela!* and have augmented the likes of David Byrne, Tony Allen, Phish, Amy Winehouse, Arcade Fire, TV on the Radio, The String Cheese Incident, Deer Tick and the late Sharon Jones. (Early Antibalas member Gabe Roth founded Daptone records). As a unit, Antibalas continue to tour and record, releasing the acclaimed *Where the Gods Are in Peace* last year. And, singer Amayo remains at the center of the musical storm.

In a celebration of Antibalas' 20th anniversary, the band's next album will feature all Amayo compositions. Trumpeter Jordan McLean, who joined the group in 1999, looks back on Antibalas' loving frontman:

It was 20 years ago that the artist known as Amayo first broke onto the New York music scene. At the time, Abraham "Duke" Amayo was a fashion designer and kung fu instructor, inhabiting a ground floor loft on Grand Avenue on Williamsburg's South Side. Starting with the band on congas and percussion, every gig with the young group allowed more room for him to contribute vocal performances. Antibalas quickly became known for their faithful covers of Fela Anikulapo Kuti, thanks in part to Amayo's intimate knowledge of the music, having come of age in Fela's Kalakuta Republic in Lagos, Nigeria.

Before long, Antibalas added vocal arrangements to some of their hottest original instrumentals, mainly contributed by Martín Perna and Daptone (then Desco) Records boss, Bosco Mann. By their second year, Antibalas had released a handful of acclaimed records, toured the U.K., Europe and the U.S., and Daptone Records had built its first Brooklyn studio in Amayo's now legendary Afro Spot Temple. It was at this time that he birthed his first band as a leader, Amayo's Fu-Arkist-Ra, whose name calls on the ancestry of Sun Ra. With "Fu," where kung fu meets Afrobeat, Amayo emerged as the next-generation composer/bandleader of Fela's stylistic creation (also described by Fela as African Classical Music).

Amayo's first compositions included "MTTT (Mother Tocker Tick Tock)," "Fist of Flowers" (expressing kung fu forms) and "Amenawon." These songs were first taught to members of Antibalas and performed as Fu Arkest-Ra at such legendary New York venues as Black Betty, and SOB's. He soon added a set of Chinese New Year/kung fu-centric songs to his catalog, often performing with full dragon and kung fu practitioners as part of the musical outfit. "Fu" had evolved into a standalone ensemble, featuring acoustic string sections and a myriad of members from the New York Afrobeat community, performing at 92Y and The Knitting Factory among many other venues.

He's since emerged as one of the great contributors to the worldwide movement of Afrobeat as a vocalist, composer and brilliantly unique (and self-taught) keyboard and vibraphone player. This is not to mention his work on sustainability infrastructure projects in his childhood home of Nigeria, focusing on water, internet and environmentally resistant construction projects. Sifu Amayo (as he is affectionately called by his bandmates and martial arts students) continues to expand his artistic résumé and his heart chakra at the same time. His newest composition, "Queen Mother"is featured on a soon-to-be released EP from Armo, a six-piece group co-founded with other members of Antibalas, including myself.

Mike Greenhaus

Antibalas

Tiny Musical Canvases: **Fan Pins**

Walk around any music festival and you're bound to stumble on corkboard after corkboard of multicolored enamel pins. Mostly fan-made, these tiny totems demonstrate the creativity of their designers and those who wear them. They symbolize the lyrical imagery of bands like the Grateful Dead and Phish in fun and often subtle ways. As Phanart's Pete Mason sees it, pin-making requires in the Phish world a unique blend of creativity and self-restraint. "A vast majority of what is produced is quality, inspired and unique, and does not use the Phish logo," he says of his Phanart collective.

And while pins have been around since the earliest days of the Dead, Mason argues that the pin-making economy has never been better. The internet gives artists the power to make, market and sell their pins to their fellow fans worldwide. Plus, there are always parking lots and official meetups by groups like Phanart to get buyers and sellers in the same room. "It's the free market at work in an impressive way and continually brings in new designs from new artists who come into the scene and take away something that inspires them to be creative," he says. "It is fascinating to see this happen tour after tour, year after year."

Below, Mason curates a sampling of several pins, both official and fan-made, to reflect the ever-growing culture around these tiny musical canvases:

Grateful Dead: "Fare Thee Well 50th "

by Mike DuBois and Kingpin Designs

Mike DuBois: "The graphic was taken from thr centerpiece of a 50th anniversary design I did, which was used on several other products, including T-shirts, posters, stickers, kids' clothing, women's clothing and a few other things. It was officially approved and licensed by the Grateful Dead merchandising and Josh [Kaufman of Kingpin Designs] liked that graphic and asked me if he could produce it as a pin. However, I had to simplify the original graphic to make it work for this type of product."

Phish: "Band in Lights"

by Andrew Bryant

Andrew Bryant: "This is a modified version of the second pin in the "Band in Lights" series (aka "BIL2"). The idea for the series came to me during a Phish show while they were playing 'Camel Walk.' Initially, it was supposed to have 'Strut Your Stuff' word bubbles. Eventually, the word bubbles were scrapped and the focus turned toward highlighting the beautiful work that [Chris] Kuroda and other lighting directors bring to the scene. The series is now comprised of several bands besides Phish and has incorporated many venues, including The Gorge, Red Rocks and MSG."

Disco Biscuits: "Digital Buddha"

by Mark Serlo

Mark Serlo: "This is the 'Digital Buddha' pin, designed and produced for the 2013 Winter Inferno run. Produced by Party Time Pins, this one has stood the test of time and still regularly commands $100-150 on the secondary market. Utilizing 3-D molding and antique gold metal, the Biscuits' circle logo subtly appears on the Buddha's belly. Buddha holds a purple flame in his left hand, symbolic of the Winter Inferno event."

Phish: "Happy Fish" pin series

by Ryan Kerrigan

Ryan Kerrigan: "The series began in 2011 and commemorates various stops on each tour. Every pin is numbered and in a limited edition, never to be reprinted. The series currently contains 112 different fishies through summer 2018. Pictured are two of the fishies in the subset called "happy fish classics–pins from before we loved pins." The four fishies in this series honor shows from the past (the 1998 Island Tour, the Utah *Dark Side* show, Big Cypress and the 2010 Berkeley Greek run)."

Twiddle "No Hate Zone"

by Pinsanity (Chuck Hoffman and Jill Savage)

Jill Savage: "'No Hate Zone' was released in April 2017 and inspired by the lyrics from Twiddle's song 'Hattie's Jam': 'It's OK to be alone/ You learn a lot about your own/ It's a no hate zone in turn.'"

Umphrey's McGee: "Jimmy Stewart"

by Sam Sutton and Mark Serlo

Sam Sutton: "A 'Jimmy Stewart' is an Umphrey's jam with a composed feel to it. Mark and I thought it would be hilarious to make a pin series that was based on Jimmy Stewart's smug mug. For this one in particular, we thought it was extra funny that he was throwing a U and an M in a gang sign style. I love making pins with my friends."

Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Continued on page 78

REVIEWS

Compiled by MIKE GREENHAUS

Parliament

PARLIAMENT

Medicaid Fraud Dogg

C KUNSPYRUHZY

"In time, everything comes back around," **George Clinton** once mused in response to a question about the veritable flood of **Parliament-Funkadelic** samples that helped propel hip-hop's emergence into the mainstream. The year was 1990 and, by then, everyone from Public Enemy to De La Soul had dipped their bucket into the P-Funk well—and this was before Dr. Dre and DJ Quik blew up the West Coast with a whole new style called, appropriately, G-funk.

In 1993, Clinton tracked "Paint the White House Black" with Dre, Ice Cube and Public Enemy, and the die was cast. Not only did he embrace his honorary role as rap godfather; true to form, he also made a bodacious move to reclaim hip-hop as his own, transforming the P-Funk sound into a bass-heavy amalgam of jeep beats, ultra-mod R&B and slick funk that seemed light-years removed from the unhinged, provocative and yet ingeniously crafted albums of the '70s.

That's not to say *Medicaid Fraud Dogg*, touted as "the first **Parliament** album in 38 years," bears no traces of the febrile mind that orchestrated such high-octane musical statements as *Up for the Down Stroke*, *Chocolate City* and *Mothership Connection*. Clinton remains every bit the deep conceptualist, whether he's lampooning our addiction to fossil fuels in "Oil Jones," or chronicling the horrors of addiction itself over the dark, subdued groove of "Pain Management," which might be his heaviest vocal performance, even with the auto-tune effects, since "Atomic Dog."

But Parliament, and P-Funk in general, are now a much different entity personnel-wise than they once were. While it's refreshing to hear **Fred Wesley** and **Pee Wee Ellis** share a jazzy horn line on the slow-rolling title track, or to catch **Mudbone Cooper** and **P-Nut Johnson** (who died in 2017) mesh their buttery vocals on "DaDa"—and bonus of bonuses, ex-Slave lead singer **Steve Arrington** on the guitar-washed anthem "No Mos," with **Blackbyrd McKnight**—the P-Funk collective have taken on a more youthful contingent over the years, which naturally pushes the sound, under Clinton's direction, further into hip-hop-flavored regions.

That influence hasn't always translated well. A chunk of Funkadelic's *First Ya Gotta Shake the Gate* sagged under the weight of crunkified beats that were already out-of-date when the album dropped in 2014. But this time around, songs like "Medicated Creep" and "Loodie Poo Da Pimp," although they throb with a drum-programmed, tech-hop beat, still retain elements of the sophisticated, swinging style—as well as the bawdy sense of humor—that defined Parliament. Clinton has made it a point of saying this will be his last ride on the Mothership; it's only fitting that he aims, as usual, for the rump-shaking outer reaches of the funk universe. ***Bill Murphy***

Roger Daltrey

As Long as I Have You

REPUBLIC/ POLYDOR

Way back in the '60s salad days of mods and rockers, The Who latched onto the phrase "maximum R&B" to describe their brash, volume-heavy yet ultimately soul-influenced music, and, from the start, it never took much digging to detect a gutbucket of R&B influences running through **Roger Daltrey**'s distinctive voice. An avid fan of Howlin' Wolf and James Brown, he let it all hang out on an early cover of the Godfather's "Please Please Please" (from the band's 1966 breakout *My Generation*), and through hits like "Substitute," "The Kids Are Alright," "Pinball Wizard" and "Baba O'Riley," all of which have burnished his rep as one of rock's most compelling frontmen. *As Long as I Have You* is the logical follow-up to 2014's *Going Back Home*, which he recorded with veteran singer-songwriter and guitarist Wilko Johnson. That album, rife with pub-rocking blues workouts penned mostly by Johnson, gave Daltrey an opening to till his native soil—a journey he resumes here with obvious delight, and without any of the maudlin nostalgia-tripping that has tempted other septuagenarian rockers (Rod Stewart, take note). Daltrey kicks it off with the title song, a rousing cover of a Garnet Mimms classic that was hot among British mods and the early-'60s "northern soul" scene. Right away, the gospel flourishes shine through, further illuminated by the velvety backing vocals of Nashville's **McCrary Sisters**, who appear on six of the album's 11 songs. ("Get on Out of the Rain," a retitled Parliament B-side from 1970 that Daltrey clearly chose for its political currency, stands out.) With age and wisdom comes an acute awareness of the world's ephemeral beauty, and Daltrey succeeds in capturing it, whether it lives in the dusky power he wrests from Nick Cave's "Into My Arms," or in the bluesy lovestruck trills of his own ballad "Certified Rose." Of course, this wouldn't be a Roger Daltrey album without some flashes of The Who. **Pete Townshend** sets the tone with a number of welcome spotlights, none more jaw dropping than his fiery acoustic guitar solo on the obscure Stephen Stills cover "How Far" from his Manassas project. Channeling the hippie-folk mystique of Zep's "Hey, Hey, What Can I Do" or the Stones' "You Can't Always Get What You Want," Daltrey and Townshend could almost be accused of showing off on this one—but when two old and practiced hands deliver a clinic on how to play off one another, you'd best just close your eyes and nod your head. ***Bill Murphy***

Roger Daltrey

Nicki Bluhm

To Rise You Gotta Fall COMPASS

The absolute best heartbreak songs have one thing in common: They remind you that pain can feel blunt, uncomplicated and raw. On her third solo album, *To Rise You Gotta Fall*, **Nicki Bluhm** documents her divorce from husband and former Gramblers bandmate Tim Bluhm. It's squarely her story, yet Bluhm writes with such straightforward clarity, simplicity and honesty that she achieves musical universality. Her heartbreak is yours. That she creates a gorgeously dusty Memphis soul sound and fills her songs with goosebump-inducing melodies is just a bonus. All the ingredients were in place for *To Rise You Gotta Fall* to be stunning. Bluhm set up shop in the legendary Sam Phillips Recording studio in Memphis and drafted producer **Matt Ross-Spang**. **Ryan Adams**, who isn't a stranger to chronicling heartbreak, co-wrote two songs. The album finds Bluhm cycling through the interlocking moments of heartbreak, capturing all the confusion and anger and sadness, sometimes all at once. From sobering realizations ("Don't you see we can't go back to dark hotels/ Pretending it's not slipping away") in the country ballad "Staring at the Sun" to pure helplessness (on the gripping "You Stopped Loving Me," Bluhm admits, "I can't stop loving you") to minute victories ("Last night I slept in the middle of the bed/ Moved only inches, but it was miles in my head" in the righteous guitar anthem "Battlechain Rose"), the singer-songwriter is laid bare across these 11 songs. If you've loved and lost, then this is essential listening. ***Justin Jacobs***

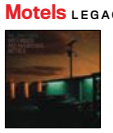
White Denim

Performance CITY SLANG

On their eyebrow-raising fifth LP (including *Workout Holiday* which was not released in the U.S.), 2011's *D*, **White Denim** captivated critics with their left-field confluence of bluesy Southern rock riffs, progressive song structures and jazz chops. They've softened their insanity on subsequent albums, but what they've lost in zany shock value, they've gained in sturdy songcraft. *Performance*, their eighth album, is their second since the departure of two crucial members from that breakout period: guitarist Austin Jenkins and drummer Josh Block, both of whom left to work with R&B newcomer Leon Bridges and create their own production company, Niles City Sound. White Denim's lineup has proved to be a work in progress ever since, and two new faces—drummer **Conrad Choucroun** and keyboardist **Michael Hunter**—join for this nine-track, 33-minute set, which focuses largely on deftly arranged blues-rock. More than ever, singer/ guitarist **James Petralli** sounds at ease in that role, howling with the raw power and charisma of The Black Keys' Dan Auerbach on the sax-laden "Magazin" and funky "Fine Slime." There are fewer surprises and left turns on *Performance*, but the proggy flourishes that pop up carry as much jolt as ever. "Double Death" morphs from a swampy, harmonica-sounding guitar riff to psychedelic vocal effects and jazzy guitar breaks; the stuttering "Moves On," meanwhile, packs a stoner-rock edge to its bluesy riff. It's hard to root for White Denim's weirdest, most unruly side—after all, no other band on the planet could have created an album as preposterously riveting as *D*. But it's also a blast hearing them refine and sculpt a more measured method of madness. ***Ryan Reed***

The Jayhawks

Back Roads and Abandoned Motels LEGACY



The Jayhawks are an alt-country institution at this point and for their 10th studio album, *Back Roads and Abandoned Motels*, the Minneapolis five-piece dig into their vaults for some old tunes that 'Hawks frontman **Gary Louris** wrote with other artists, such as **Dixie Chicks** and **Jakob Dylan**. They also mixed a few things up this time, too, with pianist **Karen Grotberg** and drummer **Tim O'Reagan** handling lead vocals on some songs—a jarring concept if you're expecting Louris' weathered voice to show up throughout. The result is a rather mellow effort, something akin to Sunday morning coffee house folk-rock. Songs like "Gonna Be a Darkness," which Louris co-wrote with Dylan, and "Need You Tonight," a collaboration with singer-songwriter **Scott Thomas**, find Louris excelling at two things he does best: digging into dark times and dwelling on romantic nostalgia. The album's two highlights, though, come at the end, with two new Louris songs rounding out the 11-song set, "Carry You to Safety" and "Leaving Detroit." The latter is a tender ballad about a devastating split, where the last one standing is left in a shattered home, with nothing else to do but take off. However, *Back Roads* doesn't feel like an essential Jayhawks listen, and those wanting an earful of the energetic days demonstrated on *Tomorrow the Green Grass*, *Smile* or *Rainy Day Music* won't get it here. But if you do spend time with *Back Roads*, then it's easy to affirm what many have known for years: Louris is still a gifted storyteller, and perhaps it's sometimes more evident in the quieter times. ***Mike Ayers***

Arctic Monkeys

Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino DOMINO

Fans have certain expectations about **Arctic Monkeys**, a British rock group who typically craft boisterous, swaggering tunes with cheeky lyrics and an underlying romp. *Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino*, the band's sixth album, is not that. Produced by **James Ford** and **Alex Turner**, the songs here are thematic and conceptual, reflecting Turner's vision of a futuristic moon colony. It has a post-modern flare—one that feels inspired by nostalgia for vintage films and novels and, for the most part, it works. This collection is clearly meant to be heard as a cohesive album—which is likely why there weren't any singles released ahead of time—and while it may diverge from the classic Arctic Monkeys' sound, it's not entirely coming from left field. Turner has always been a thoughtful, artsy songwriter who carefully balances pop tendencies with strange psychedelic moments. *Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino* is like listening to a story—one that's unwieldy and nonlinear but told compellingly. "Four Out of Five," which received an accompanying music video inspired by filmmaker Stanley Kubrick, has a '70s vibe (and

some of that quintessential Arctic Monkeys wit), with moments that feel akin to a Lou Reed standard. This is a bizarre album, but that's not a bad thing. No musician is beholden to keep releasing the same songs over and over, and Turner clearly has a lot more to say than can be contained in a radio pop number. *Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino* may be less immediate than the band's past work, but it's equally fulfilling. ***Emily Zemler***

Jon Cleary

Dyna-Mite THIRTY TIGERS/FHQ

Leave it to a guy born in England to keep the spirit of classic New Orleans R&B going. **Jon Cleary** knew early in life that his destiny was to move to Louisiana and play the music of the city he'd come to love, and that's what the pianist and vocalist has been doing now for more than two decades. *Dyna-Mite* follows 2015's *GoGo Juice* and, as on that one, the leader mostly leans toward a full, horn-accented sound to get his rhythms where he wants them. Blasts of trombone, tenor saxophone and trumpet provide Cleary with some extra muscle and color on half of *Dyna-Mite*, leading off with the sinuous grooves of the title track. (The Meters' **Leo Nocentelli** adds guitar licks like only he can to the tune.) Even on those tracks that strip it down—"Big Greasy" is all Cleary (piano, Hammond B3, guitar, bass, drums and vocals) with **Jamison Ross** on drums, and "Best Ain't Good Enuff" sends home everyone except Ross, a couple of sax players and a few background vocalists—there's never a lack of wattage. Cleary knows the history of this music, and its natural vibe, inside and out: He can call in the whole crew and tone it down for a soulful ballad like "21st Century Gypsy Singing Lover Man" and just like that it's 100-percent pure NOLA. ***Jeff Tamarkin***

Rebelution

Free Rein 87 MUSIC/EASY STAR

SoCal reggae-rock outfit **Rebelution** have been a leading voice in their scene for the better part of a decade now, even garnering a nod from the music establishment in 2017 when their album *Falling Into Place* was nominated for the Best Reggae Album Grammy. But growing success or not, the quartet seems utterly unconcerned with expectations; this is a band who locked into a sound long ago, and aim to explore every corner of it. While the band is touting their sixth LP *Free Rein* as an experimental leap, the truth is a bit subtler, and the album is really a new take on Rebelution's tried and true style—unabashed positivity, colorful reggae rhythms, punchy horns and rock guitar—updated with bits of fluid jazz licks, hushed

Gorillaz

acoustic guitars and some down and dirty dub. And, as always, it's packed with **Eric Rachmany**'s infectious hooks and laidback grooves that are tailor-made for parking lot tailgates and pool parties alike. Post-studio help from Jamaican producers **Winta James** and **Don Corleon** adds some extra shine. All that said, where Rebelution has truly excelled is in Rachmany's pop-savvy songwriting. These 12 tracks are among the tightest and catchiest the group has ever produced. Even when the band spreads out a bit, like on the splashy, cascading riffing of "Trap Door" or the beach-sunset folk and twinkling guitar solos of "Healing," they don't waste a second jamming on anything less than airtight. And while it'd be refreshing to see Rebelution go on a real musical expedition—that gorgeous trumpet on the former could've been a wonderful rabbit hole to explore—their sound is still sunshine. ***Justin Jacobs***

Body/Head

The Switch MATADOR

Of the post-Sonic Youth projects, bassist **Kim Gordon**'s **Body/Head** outfit with guitarist **Bill Nace** is easily the most experimental, but the idea driving the duo is simple: Plug in and riff. Their 2013 debut *Coming Apart* was loud and abrasive and they certainly keep that vibe going on their second album *The Switch*, with the two presenting their most avant-garde work to date, spread out over the course of just five songs spanning nearly 40 minutes. Their improvisational approach, which foregoes any rhythmic elements, can make for a rather strained listening experience. The music is hypnotic and dark, from the opening number "Last Time" through the spacey final, "Reverse Hard." At times, they quiet things down, giving listeners' ears a reprieve of sorts, but that feels minimal at best. And the same goes for the lyrics. Moaning, ghost-like sounds pop up here and there, but it's best not to look for meaning, or even what they're saying. It's an approach that's best exemplified on "Change My Brain," a 10-minute drone-rock number, where ambient noises mix with rough guitar textures and the pitches change slightly. But if you pay close attention, it feels like there is a direction they're taking. It's just ever so subtle. And this is what Body/Head are about. A cursory listen would make it easy to gloss over *The Switch* as just a bunch of noise, but focused listeners can hear two people learning to play off each other, even five years into the project. It's improvisation come to life in ways that you rarely hear anymore—and that most artists don't dare to release. ***Mike Ayers***

Gorillaz

The Now Now PARLOPHONE

When Blur mastermind **Damon Albarn** formed **Gorillaz** in 1998, he based that post-Britpop endeavor on two major gambles: that his audience would give a shit about bizarre cartoon characters and the already-boring rap-rock trend. The first aesthetic choice was benign enough—after all, what percentage of Albarn's fans are actually invested in the ongoing adventures of his "virtual" band? But it's shocking how well the latter paid off. Across the first five Gorillaz LPs, Albarn seamlessly fused his slacker indie-rock vocals with dubby electronics and hip-hop swagger, roping in guest spots from both emerging emcees (Danny Brown, D.R.A.M.) and long-anointed rap royalty (Snoop Dogg, De La Soul). With *The Now Now*, arriving barely a year after 2017's *Humanz*, he rolls the dice once more, axing the stylistic twists and all-star cameos in favor of a compact, largely solo space-funk adventure. Jazz-soul guitarist **George Benson** lays down some slick electric guitar on "Humility," a whirlwind of sparkling synths and spasmodic wah-wah bass; and **Snoop Dogg** drops by again on "Hollywood," adding his charismatic swagger to a campy groove that recalls Beck via *Midnite Vultures*. But Albarn commands the rest alone, veering from New Wave-ish synth-pop ("Tranz") to the stylish art-pop of "Fire Flies." Unlike every Gorillaz album before it, *The Now Now* doesn't offer awkward asides or regrettable, sore-thumb experiments—it's one track after another of relentlessly funky escapism. ***Ryan Reed***

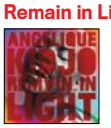
Brad Mehldau Trio

Seymour Reads the Constitution! NONESUCH

For nearly every detour he takes—his previous two releases were a set of duets with mandolinist/vocalist Chris Thile and a solo recording—jazz pianist **Brad Mehldau** always returns to his rhythm section: bassist **Larry Grenadier** and drummer **Jeff Ballard**. The trio is Mehldau's rock, his home base, that place where he can always continue where he left off. When we last heard from the three musicians in 2016, they were offering up *Blues and Ballads*, a blend of songs by Lennon-McCartney, Cole Porter and others. This time, there are more new interpretations—Brian Wilson, another McCartney, Frederick Loewe, Sam Rivers—but three new originals as well, including the two opening tracks. "Spiral," the first of those, showcases the **Brad Mehldau Trio** doing what it does best: setting up a melodic theme, exploring it in depth, pushing it around a bit and casting it aside, but never quite leaving it behind. At this point, after more than a decade together, the three are always in a shared pocket, locked in so tightly that there isn't any leading or following involved—they just know where they want to go, and they get there effortlessly. They initially approach the classic Beach Boys tune "Friends" in a surprisingly straightforward manner, with Mehldau barely deviating from the familiar melody and the rhythm section keeping it casual; a mid-section lull gives Ballard an opportunity to add a little flash, but no one's too interested in making a show of this one. They save that for "Beatrice," the album-closing Rivers composition, wherein Mehldau transposes Rivers' saxophone lines into piano as if they were always meant to be played that way. ***Jeff Tamarkin***

Angélique Kidjo

Remain in Light KRAVENWORKS



Call it a "reverse Paul Simon": Instead of the now well-worn, clichéd cultural move of a Western pop artist putting their stamp on African music, Beninese vocalist **Angélique Kidjo** has injected the vibrant heart of Afrobeat into Talking Heads' *Remain in Light* with her track-by-track reinvention of the band's 1980 masterpiece. It's a heady concept: Heads mastermind David Byrne and his co-producer

Brian Eno were deeply influenced by African music, layering polyrhythms, funky basslines and interwoven grooves into hypnotic, repetitive song structures. (Their collaborative LP from the following year, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, burrows even deeper down that rabbit hole.) Kidjo amplifies the album's West African heart by emphasizing the rhythm and the brass, and adding in newly written African language vocals, stripping away the mountains of keyboards and studio effects. The songwriter occasionally sticks close to the original feel: "Born Under Punches" thrives on funky clavinet and mutant synth tones, echoing the spastic guitar lines of the original. But every track sounds reborn: "Houses in Motion" is the immediate standout, rebuilt into a full-blown Afrobeat workout with waves of horns and busy bass. The studio musicians leave their mark, particularly bassist **Pino Palladino** and Fela Kuti drummer **Tony Allen**—but it's a testament to Kidjo's vocal command that, in the face of such virtuoso talents, her presence looms largest. Her most dramatic reinvention comes with "Once in a Lifetime," as her African chants offer fresh perspective to a long-cemented classic. "And you may find yourself in another part of the world," she sings. We do indeed. ***Ryan Reed***

The Travelin' McCourys

The Travelin' McCourys

MCCOURY MUSIC

You can't accuse **The Travelin' McCourys** of rushing into things. The bluegrass quintet (**Ronnie McCoury** on mandolin, **Rob McCoury** on banjo, **Jason Carter** on fiddle, **Alan Bartram** on bass and latest recruit **Cody Kilby** on guitar) has been around for eight years—longer than the lifespan of many bands—and has only now released their proper debut album. Of course, they've been anything but idle all this time, serving as the road and studio band for patriarch Del McCoury, working the festival circuit and more. With all that prep time, perhaps the Travelers might've opted for something more ambitious and elaborate, but that's not what they're about: This music is as straightforward as the album title, as if to say, "This is who we are and we have no reason to pretend we're anything else." The songwriting is split between band members and outside composers, the most notable of the latter coming from the Grateful Dead family. The harmonies and breaks of "Cumberland Blues" are a perfect fit, and "Loser," with its lonesome, mournful vocal, transposes to the format easily. Another cover, John Hartford's "Natural to Be Gone," houses some of the most virtuosic picking and harmonizing of the set, but there's some of that going on pretty much everywhere, from the mandolin-fiddle jockeying of "Borderline" to the high-speed soloing that perks up the opening track, "Let Her Go." Bluegrass is alive and well with the Travelin' McCourys, for sure. ***Jeff Tamarkin***

Arthur Buck

Arthur Buck NEW WEST

Throughout their careers, **Joseph Arthur** and **Peter Buck** have made it a point to defy expectations and pursue unlikely muses whenever the opportunity strikes. **Arthur Buck**, their first formal joint project after years of collaborations, not only gives the two players equal standing, but also the opportunity to pursue new sounds from a fresh perspective. While the union was the result of happenstance—Arthur left his dobro behind at a festival hosted by Buck and his wife in Mexico and returned to retrieve his instrument—it prompted the two men to try a collaboration. The results are as sunny as the scenario suggests, a series of sing-alongs of casual but concerted intent. The harmonious chime of "Are You Electrified?" the casual sway of "I Am the Moment" and the catchy "If You Wake Up in Time" all testify to Arthur Buck's instant symmetry. While the pair sometimes tend to mine moodiness and melancholia as individuals, here, with few exceptions ("Summertime," "The Wanderer," "Before Your Love Is Gone"), they mostly opt for more upbeat fare. Even an attempt at social commentary, "American Century" ("America just crumbling down in the nuclear rain"), manages to get in a groove with its catchy refrain. *Arthur Buck* deserves credit as the superb standout that it is. ***Lee Zimmerman***

The Devil Makes Three

Chains Are Broken NEW WEST

These Americana heroes have been charting their own course since they first burst onto the San Francisco scene. The trio—**Pete Bernhard** on acoustic guitar; **Cooper McBean** on guitar, tenor banjo and assorted stringed instruments and **Lucia Turino** on upright bass—serve up a rambunctious combination of folk, gypsy jazz, ragtime and country that makes them hard to pin down. On their eighth outing (including their live album *Stomp & Smash*), they bring along drummer **Stefan Amidon** and delve deeper into the darker side of human nature. This time, the arrangements, still a winning combination of acoustic and electric impulses, echo the sounds of the late-'50s and early-'60s, with lyrics that mirror the dire situation of life in today's America. "Can't Stop" blends doo-wop and twangy country guitars for an ode to self-destruction that dances

SEPTEMBER 2018 CD SAMPLER

Listen at RELIX.COM/SEP2018CD

1

NATHANIEL RATELIFF & THE NIGHT SWEATS
"A Little Honey"
From the album *Tearing at the Seams*
Stay Records/
Concord Music Group

Tearing at the Seams, the vivacious and inventive record from Denver's Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats, is grounded in old-school R&B and rock-and-roll, but these songs are far too urgent for the retro or revivalist tag.

nathanielrateliff.com

2

GROUNDATION
"One but Ten"
From the album *The Next Generation*
HTS Roots Creations

A song about changes, "One but Ten" builds slowly from Wil Blades on the organ, and then suddenly bursts into an uptempo groove. Lead singer Harrison Stafford sings "our world is full of problems, but we are here to solve them." Impeccably recorded by Jim Fox on 2" analog tape, the song soars to its conclusion featuring a drum and organ battle!

groundation.com

3

CURSE OF LONO
"Kathleen"
From the album *As I Fell*
Submarine Cat Records

"Kathleen" is taken from Curse Of Lono's forthcoming second album *As I Fell*. Recorded between California's Joshua Tree and London, As I Fell follows last year's critically acclaimed debut Severed, a sumptuously cinematic record that combines harmony-laden Americana with driving, gothic alt-rock. As I Fell is available now.

curseoflonoband.com

4

LYMAN ELLERMAN BIO
"I Wish I Was a Train"
From the album *I Wish I Was a Train*
Woodshed Resistance Records

One of the few remaining troubadours that has yet to be swept into the pop culture of the music industry, Lyman Ellerman exemplifies true originality with his honest and raw songwriting. His seventh album, *I Wish I Was a Train*, is an important artistic mile marker in Ellerman's career.

lymanellermanandco.com

5

LADY LEGS
"French Beach Music"
From the album *Holy Heatwave*
Communicating Vessels

Lady Legs have been writing wonderfully off-kilter, poppy garage-rock since their formation in 2013, and premiered their debut album this year, titled *Holy Heatwave*. The band has been refining their sound for their sophomore LP, set for release in late summer.

ladylegsband.com

6

RACHEL ANN MORGAN
"Cheap Romantics"
Single
Self-released

Rachel Ann Morgan is known for her extensive range and soulful vocals. She has shared the stage with the likes of Susan Tedeschi, Warren Haynes, Robert Randolph, Marcus King and Ron Holloway. The R.A.M. Band delivers a dynamic sound accompanied by emotive vocals that will keep you wanting more.

rachelannmorgan.net

7

JOSH KING
"The Well"
From the album *Into the Blue*
Self-released

After two decades as a professional musician, King has finally found his voice as a songwriter, with his melodic roots-pop shimmering brilliantly in the Southern sun. Born in Mobile, Ala., and cutting his teeth in the Greensboro, N.C. scene, with *Into the Blue*, King delivers a hopeful meditation on getting right, forging a bold new path and following it to a sense of purpose. He's a talented singer-songwriter in the grand North Carolina tradition that also gave us Piedmont blues, Link Wray, the dB's, Whiskeytown, Ryan Adams and Polvo.

joshkingnc.com

8

SWIZZILLE TRIP
"313 Vapor Trail"
From the album *Interstellar Wonderlove*
Self-released

Swizzille Trip is a psychedelic band from Detroit featuring Michael Kalb on guitar/vocals, Dave Miller II on drums and Kyle Mikolajczyk on bass. "313 Vapor Trail" is fresh off their new album *Interstellar Wonderlove*. Swizzille Trip take's their listeners on a sometimes dreamy, sometimes intense, fun-filled twisty-turny ride.

swizzilletrip.com

9

AUSTIN COLÓN
"Fall Back Into Place"
From the album *The Path Ahead*
Self-released

Austin Colón is a guitarist, multi-instrumentalist, singer-songwriter, director, editor, engineer and performer. The album *The Path Ahead* was fully written, performed and mastered at Earthshine Studios by Austin Colón. Austin's music is for anyone who is interested in melody, lyrics, guitar and rock music.

austincolonmusic.bandcamp.com

10

THE UNDERDOGS
"Metro"
From the album *Back to Basics*
Black Water Sound Records

The Underdogs play in major tonality, aggressively and heartfelt. They look forward to becoming a nationwide-to-worldwide success and only aim to entertain and please all those that enjoy fun, high-energy music. They focus on positive music and atmosphere, and are avidly recording on studio work and performing at various venues.

blackwatersoundrecords.com/theunderdogs

11

THE JACKSTONES
"Rotation"
From the album *Love Badly*
Self-released

The Jackstones received the IMAs Album of the Year in the country genre for their 2014 release, *What Brings You Here*. The follow-up, *Love Badly*, is a rocking carnival of crafty lyrics and gritty musicianship created by the Southern California band. Always great live or add it to your playlist now.

thejackstones.com

12

AMOUR GLAMOUR
"Scüzzy"
From the album *Dramatic Cinematic*
Self-released

Amour Glamour is a sporadic clash of indie based in Los Angeles. Shane Malins, the creator of the band, plays all the instruments as well as writes and produces the music. If Cher and David Bowie had a baby, then it would sound nothing like this.

amourglamourmusic.com

13

EDITOR'S PICK: HOWLIN RAIN
"Alligator Bride"
From the album *The Alligator Bride*
Silver Current Records

Led by singer/guitarist/lead howler Ethan Miller, Oakland, Calif.'s Howlin Rain has just released their fifth studio album, *The Alligator Bride*. Uncut Magazine called the record: "Classic rock in the most pastoral, sun-soaked '70s sense, with traces of Springsteen at his most gospel, Creedence at their grooviest, Free and American Beauty." Howlin Rain are touring throughout 2018 in the U.S. and Europe in support of the new collection.

howlinrain.com

14

JAMOFF! WINNER: GREGG PARK
"Deep Elem Blues"
From the album *Free Flowing Musical Experience*
Self-released

Gregg Park is known for capturing the essence of the musicians that influenced him, while infusing his own original style and putting a twist on every song he plays. His work ethic and musical energy is palpable to audiences at *Free Flowing Musical Experience* shows with musical partner Scott Fallon.

ffmeband.com

For more information about how to appear on the CD sampler, please contact Connor@relix.com.

between ironic humor and painful resignation. For the lyrics of "Pray for Rain," Bernhard draws on a handful of Biblical references and mentions the assassination of Martin Luther King. It's a galloping ragtime tune that addresses the disconnected feelings that working-class Americans are getting used to as the new Century unwinds. A country backbeat drives "Need to Lose," a Bakersfield-style romp that equates life in a touring band with the chances a gambler takes when the cards are stacked against him. Bernhard sings the hook line—"I don't gamble 'cause I want to win boys, I gamble 'cause I need to lose"—with a deadpan delivery, while "Deep Down" is a bouncy fusion of rockabilly and Chicago blues, a celebration of masculine belligerence worthy of Howlin' Wolf.
J. Poet

The Mother Hips

Chorus BLUE ROSE MUSIC

In September 2015, **The Mothers Hips**' guitarist and vocalist **Tim Bluhm** was in a freak speed-flying accident, which left his body bruised and battered. He had to go through numerous surgeries, replacing his ankle, a shattered hip and more. So it's a bit of a modern miracle that the band has returned just a few years later with a new studio album, *Chorus*, after potentially losing it all. Since their 1992 debut *Back to the Grotto*, the band has always been rather freewheeling when it comes to their studio work. Go in, figure it out. But for *Chorus*, they took the opposite approach and spent a year crafting demos before the actual studio sessions took place. And the result paid off—they sound polished and willing to explore many more sounds and styles than on past recordings while still presenting a cohesive offering. Standout numbers include the country-rocker "It'll Be Gone," which starts out as an acoustic number, but builds into something that recalls the guitar stylings of Wilco's Nels Cline, while Bluhm ominously sings "I've got a secret/ I'll tell you my friend/ I'm going to Heaven in a pop-top can." The power-pop anthem "End of the Chorus" retains that classic Hips sound they cultivated in the '90s, where metaphors about bad choices and darkness are run throughout. And on "January," the Hips get somber and nostalgic, with Bluhm tenderly espousing a goodbye of sorts: "All the things you left behind/ Material and the human kind/ Never could define you." *Chorus* could be an album about all the things that Bluhm likely experienced in the aftermath of his accident or his personal and professional breakup with wife and former bandmate Nicki. Either way, The Mother Hips are in fine form.
Mike Ayers

The Mother Hips

The English Beat

Here We Go Love SELF-RELEASED

For a brief while in the '80s, the revival/updating of Jamaican ska music was all the rage in Britain, largely driven by four bands: The Specials, Madness, The Selecter and The Beat (called **The English Beat** in the U.S. for contractual reasons). The last we heard from the original Beat on disc was back in 1982, with the release of *Special Beat Service*. They split up, went various ways and, eventually, two new versions of The Beat emerged: one starring vocalist Ranking Roger and the other featuring singer/guitarist **Dave Wakeling**. The latter iteration is the one we have here, and you'd never know more than three decades have passed—*Here We Go Love* could've come out in 1983 and would've felt right at home. The ska revival bands were always at least partially political, and that's still happening: "If Killing Worked," set to a perhaps peppier rhythm than its sentiment calls for, states: "If killing worked it would have worked by now." And "Redemption Time" takes a more skeptical view, noting, "We're right on the edge of time," but it falls short of suggesting what should be done about it. It's not a bummer of an album though; songs powered by this much jumpy ebullience in the engine room are, by their very nature, irresistible, and tunes like "Dem Call It Ska," the unabashedly romantic "Be There for You" and even the obscenity-loaded bit of nastiness that serves as the title track are immediate grabbers. Good to hear The English Beat again! ***Jeff Tamarkin***

The Internet

HIVE MIND COLUMBIA

HIVE MIND is **The Internet**'s fourth full-length album and the much-anticipated follow-up to 2015's *Ego Death*, which earned a Grammy nomination for Best Urban Contemporary Album. The Los Angeles-based musicians seem to have side-stepped any possible pressure, instead crafting a dynamic collection of funk-laced songs that veer from genre to genre. It's a joyful, boisterous album—**Syd Bennett**, the songwriter and singer for The Internet, said that the mission of these tracks was to promote togetherness, particularly among young Black listeners. (In a press release, she said, "We realized that we're the only band of our kind. And we want to really solidify ourselves as that, as the best"). Jiving opener "Come Together" sets the tone immediately, offering a wave of positivity in its shimmering melody and, while the rest of the album doesn't necessarily sound the same, that effort is tangible throughout. "Come Over" has a soulful groove and subtle swagger, while "It Gets Better (With Time)" embraces an R&B vibe that fully showcases Syd's elegant, crooning vocals. *HIVE MIND* culminates in "Hold On," a sweetly offered number with a glittering indie-rock melody, punctuating the album with a pensive moment of beauty. Like on past albums, it's hard to categorize these songs, but the themes of unity and community create a sense of cohesion and cool that pervades the album. Everything here feels effortless, and *HIVE MIND* is a notable evolution for The Internet, one that solidifies them as an important band for a new generation. ***Emily Zemler***

Justice

Woman Worldwide

ED BANGER/BECAUSE MUSIC

For over a decade, French duo **Justice** have been one of the more engaging acts on the dance scene, adding an intensity and a grit to their electro-workouts that made them appealing to rock fans and club kids alike. After 2016's *Woman*, and the resulting worldwide tour, Justice is back with *Woman Worldwide*—it's an anthology of sorts, collecting cuts from the last 11 years, with everything reworked, twisted and evolved. Backstory aside, though, *Woman Worldwide* is just a hell of a lot of fun. This 15-track album is a pulsing, wriggling, blazing assortment of electronic bangers, like Daft Punk's *Alive 2007* set in a grimy basement where everyone's wearing leather. Old favorites, like Justice's white-knuckled (and perfectly named) 2007 single "Stress" get re-polished and come out even heavier than before. With this new "Stress," Justice tease out the track's jittery, teeth-chattering synths and make them scream, pushing the song from a stress dream to a full-on, bed-sweating nightmare. The 2016 track "Chorus" gets a similar upgrade, transformed from a fairly forgettable day-glow washout to a speed-racing, whiplash-inducing eruption. The song originally could've soundtracked a daydream; now it's fodder for a chase scene. If you're a Justice fan, then *Woman Worldwide* is a kick—with the duo showing off how they've grown and strengthened their best songs on the road. And for newcomers, all the essentials are here, bigger and bolder than ever. ***Justin Jacobs***

Dave Alvin and Jimmie Dale Gilmore

Downey to Lubbock YEP ROC

There's a lot of backstory here—how these two giants of Americana trod the same path way back when in the '60s, spending time at LA's Ash Grove club, where they'd see blues heroes like Lightnin' Hopkins and Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee, and how they went on to honor those roots, in groups and solo projects, soon after. But the important thing is that they've finally made a record together, and that it's everything you'd want a **Dave Alvin/ Jimmie Dale Gilmore** collaboration to be. One listen and you'll be wondering why it didn't happen a long time ago. Alvin and Gilmore elaborate on the tale of their alliance in the boogie-woogieing title track, then get on with it, working their way through tunes by some of those heroes and others who might be less familiar but no less potent. "Buddy Brown's Blues" isn't one of Hopkins' best-known songs, but after hearing Gilmore rock it up here, you'll want to know why it isn't. "Stealin', Stealin'" the jug band perennial, is given the kind of good-time treatment that would've made the Lovin' Spoonful jealous and Lloyd Price's "Lawdy Miss Clawdy," infused with barrelhouse piano and spunky, crunchy guitar, takes on a whole new level of nasty. The biggest surprise here, though, has to be "Get Together," the Dino Valenti-by-way-of-the-Youngbloods hippie anthem. Delivered sans irony, with its sincerity intact, the song—nobody's idea of classic blues—retains its still-relevant message in the care of these two master craftsmen. Hopefully a volume two is in the cards, this time, sporting an album's worth of Alvin-Gilmore song credits. ***Jeff Tamarkin***

Family and Friends

Felix Culpa SELF-RELEASED

With their full-length debut, *Felix Culpa*, Athens, Ga.-based **Family and Friends** have branded themselves as a communal combo that stays true to their all-inclusive handle. Their music is dirven by tribal tempos and a kinetic pulse that underscores an outwardly expansive sound, with duelling drummers, cello, trumpet and viola added to the usual instrumental accoutrements. "So we're back to where we started/ Slow dancing in the garden/ Underneath the stars," they sing on album opener "Ourboros," setting up the meditative mood for all that follows. Most of the material maintains that consistent drive and delivery, but when they settle into more ethereal realms, as suggested by the swirling textures of "Double Vision" and the radiant "So Within // So Without," the cosmic cacophony evolves with a shifting series of soundscapes that keep the cohesion intact. That said, there are also plenty of atmospherics radiating from well below the surface, adding to the overall propulsive energy. Producer **Brad Wood** (Liz Phair, Smashing Pumpkins, Sunny Day Real Estate) has plenty of experience with bands that boast similar ambitions, and though Family and Friends' lyrics deal more with internal rumination than outward aggression, it makes for a powerful impression regardless. The overarching approach veers from earnest anthem-like posturing to a more psychedelic sensibility, but the intriguing arrangements create a reliable middle ground. Even the most reverent tones eventually crest with purpose and precision. ***Lee Zimmerman***

OFF THE TRACKS

Curse of Lono

As I Fell SUBMARINE CAT

Releasing two records in less than two years isn't an easy feat, and **Curse of Lono** managed to do it on opposite sides of the world. The quintet's sophomore release *As I Fell* was recorded in two disparate locales (Joshua Tree, Calif. and Hackney, London) and that ambling, restless mentality seeps into its 11 tracks. Much like the band's debut, *Severed*, Curse of Lono's second outing takes on heavy themes like drugs, death and the emotional wreckage that comes with them. Gothic imagery abounds and singer-songwriter **Felix Bechtolsheimer** fights his demons valiantly, with cinematic, indie soundscapes and a writer's wit. "Honey wait 'til it gets dark, I've got a dagger for your lovers heart," he sings on "Valentine," the albums' upbeat opener. "When I write a song, I always have visions in my head. I see the characters and I see the landscapes," Bechtolsheimer said in a recent documentary about creating this LP. And while the cosmic rumblings of a song like "I'd Start A War for You," sound akin to Pink Floyd's "Run Like Hell," and hint at Bechtolsheimer's darker tendencies, it's tracks like "Blackout Fever," with its group vocals and thumping bassline that give this gothic landscape the perfect amount of shine. Consequently, *As I Fell* is equal parts British gloom and American mysticism; and the same could be said for Curse of Lono itself. ***Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta***

Traveller

Western Movies

REFUGE FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

Traveller is something of an alt-country music supergroup, combining the forces of **Cory Chisel**, **Robert Ellis** and **Jonny Fritz**. (Although, the trio seems to take the idea of a supergroup with a wry grain of salt.) Together, the musicians make folksy country tunes that are equal parts playful and seriously crafted. It often sounds nostalgic and vintage, like you've stumbled in on a desolate Western bar in the '70s where the three musicians are digging into gritty, amiable songs. Opening number "Nobody Makes It Out" is a propulsive acoustic rocker about being trapped in a small town, while "Western Movies" adds a cinematic sweep to the pedal-steel guitars and sweet croon of the singers. "Lonely All My Life" is melancholy and gently wrought, the sort of song best played when broken-hearted and alone. It's a deeply affecting track and impressive in its simplicity. That sort of ease is what ultimately makes *Western Movies* so strong. The songs come almost effortlessly, with nothing overly orchestrated, and the chemistry between the three musicians is natural and confident. The most striking moment arrives toward the end of the album on "When You're Away," a sorrowful number that hinges on the evocatively sung line "I'm only happy when you're here." Sometimes a few simple, genuine songs is the most effective effort. ***Emily Zemler***

Wild Nothing

Indigo CAPTURED TRACKS

Jack Tatum's creative progression appears to run parallel with his recording budget. On his 2010 debut LP, *Gemini*, the singer-songwriter worked from within the confines of his dorm room, making up for a lack of raw fidelity with a surplus of atmospheric romanticism. He graduated to a legit recording studio for his 2012 follow-up, *Nocturne*, and then to an even more lavish setup with 2016's *Life of Pause*—and both albums suitably swelled in sonic scope, layering strings, saxophones and marimbas into his effusive arrangements. With *Indigo*, Tatum continues to ride that wave of ambition, cross-pollinating his ornate demos with material he tracked alongside a live drummer and guitarist. And the album's hi-fi euphoria reaches a new level on the record, heavy on sumptuous yacht-rock grooves ("Partners in Motion," with its sassy saxophone and high-octave, sundeck-ready guitar riffs), vintage synth-pop sweetness ("Letting Go") and baroque-pop elegance (the string-assisted "Flawed Translation"). Unlike other indie-rockers who draw liberally from the past, Tatum never feels like he's reaching blatantly into a playlist of influences. And the main reason is the breadth of his influence: Just when you have him pegged for a synth-pop or dream-pop revivalist, he ventures into textural post-punk ("Canyon on Fire") or full-on keyboard ambience ("Dollhouse"). "It's getting hard for me to reframe all those shifting memories," he croons over moon-kissed guitars on "Letting Go." But from the sound of *Indigo*, he's having an easier time than ever. ***Ryan Reed***

Hot Buttered Rum

Lonesome Panoramic SELF-RELEASED

After nearly 20 years as bluegrass stalwarts, **Hot Buttered Rum** continue to barrel forward with the release of their sixth studio album *Lonesome Panoramic*. Guitarist **Nat Keefe** and multi-instrumentalist **Erik Yates** are once again at the helm, bolstered by the glowing talents of longtime bassist **Bryan Horne**, fiddler/vocalist **Zebulon Bowles** and drummer/percussionist/mandolinist **James Stafford**. Inspired by the views from the Panoramic House Studio in Northern California where HBR recorded the album, *Lonesome Panoramic* pulls at all the right heartstrings, oscillating between joyous numbers and tracks that could soundtrack a good front porch cry. Like all great bluegrass ballads, "Country Tunes & Love Songs," with its layered harmonies and winding lead fiddle is warm, yet somehow drenched in heartache, while "Never Got Married," with its rapid-fire picking, has a raucous, New Grass Revival feel. *Lonesome Panoramic* never goes too low or too high; it just rides the waves of emotion we all experience day by day. Self-produced by the band, the record is what Keefe describes as "the result of different thematic and stylistic threads that Butter has been chasing over the years: driving up-tempo string-band tunes, layers of dark lonesome drum grooves, letting things go and embracing what we have." These themes are nothing new, especially in bluegrass—the genre was crafted as a cathartic output for the downtrodden—but that hasn't prevented HBR from creating an album that pulses with fresh life. ***Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta***

Dr. Octagon

Moosebumps: An Exploration Into Modern Day Horripilation

BULK RECORDINGS

When you create an era-defining classic, no matter the medium, it's a dicey prospect to try to recapture the same magic more than 20 years later. (Just ask George Lucas.) Back in 1996, on the strength of mind-bending cuts like "Earth People" and "Blue Flowers," *Dr. Octagonecologyst* detonated like a surrealist cluster bomb, forcing hip-hop culture to hit the reset button while a wealth of quirky underground artists, from MF Doom to Aesop Rock, joined the party. Eccentricity is still **Kool Keith**'s currency of the realm, and it powers much of the too-long-rumored reunion with producer **Dan the Automator** and vinyl slasher **DJ Qbert**, his fellow travelers in **Dr. Octagon**. By its very nature, *Moosebumps* can't possibly live up to the spontaneity, freaky exuberance and trend-setting sound of its storied predecessor, but Keith still struts with his inimitable rapid-fire, head-

Hot Buttered Rum

spinning word salad, from the dark-and-funky "Operation Zero" ("She on the autobahn speeding with a tampon/ Hexagon, Pulling over, whilst she drinking a john/ I'm Don Juan, catching panties like Lynn Swann") to the skit-like, Deltron 3030 throwback "3030 Meets the Doc (Part 1)," featuring **Del the Funky Homosapien** and echoing 2013's rambunctious Dr. OctoTron team-up. Automator rises to the occasion with some of his lushest textures and beats—check the insane tabla breaks on "Black Hole Son"—while Qbert shows why he remains one of the world's most dexterous turntablists with his fleet-fingered scratches on "Area 54." In the end, *Moosebumps* doesn't quite capture the lightning-in-a-bottle of *Dr. Octagonecologyst* but, as "sequels" go, it's still light years beyond a dud like *Phantom Menace*. So now we can say it: The doctor is most definitely in. ***Bill Murphy***

The Beach Boys

The Beach Boys With the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

CAPITOL/UME

On paper, it sounds like a terrible idea. These rock-band-meets-orchestra mashups—and there have been more of them than you think—hardly ever work, with the orchestras more often than not overwhelming the mix and obscuring the nuances of the original recordings. But producers **Nick Patrick** and **Don Reedman** and the London-based **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** have gotten it right. The Royals, unlike most orchestras, know how to sweeten rock successfully, having mixed it up in the past couple of years alone with vintage recordings of Elvis Presley and Roy Orbison. (They also gave us the *Hooked on Classics* series in the '80s, but let's not go there.) They understand that rock plays by different rules than classical music and that their mission is not simply to put a lot of strings behind old recordings, but to enhance what's great about the original—to allow this very familiar music to be heard in a new way. Some **Beach Boys** tracks are better suited for the treatment than others: "Fun, Fun, Fun" doesn't need an orchestra, but *Pet Sounds* tunes such as "Here Today," "You Still Believe in Me" and especially "God Only Knows" are enriched by the subtle, light touch the RPO brings to the music. The orchestra is particularly adept at fashioning new intros that lead seamlessly into the music we already know: "Heroes and Villains" only needs the 15 dynamic seconds the Royals put at the top for the recording to take on a whole new flavor, and the lushness that now ushers in "In My Room" is undoubtedly something **Brian Wilson** (who is on record as loving the project) would have done himself if he'd had the resources. ***Jeff Tamarkin***

Ume

Other Nature MODERN OUTSIDER

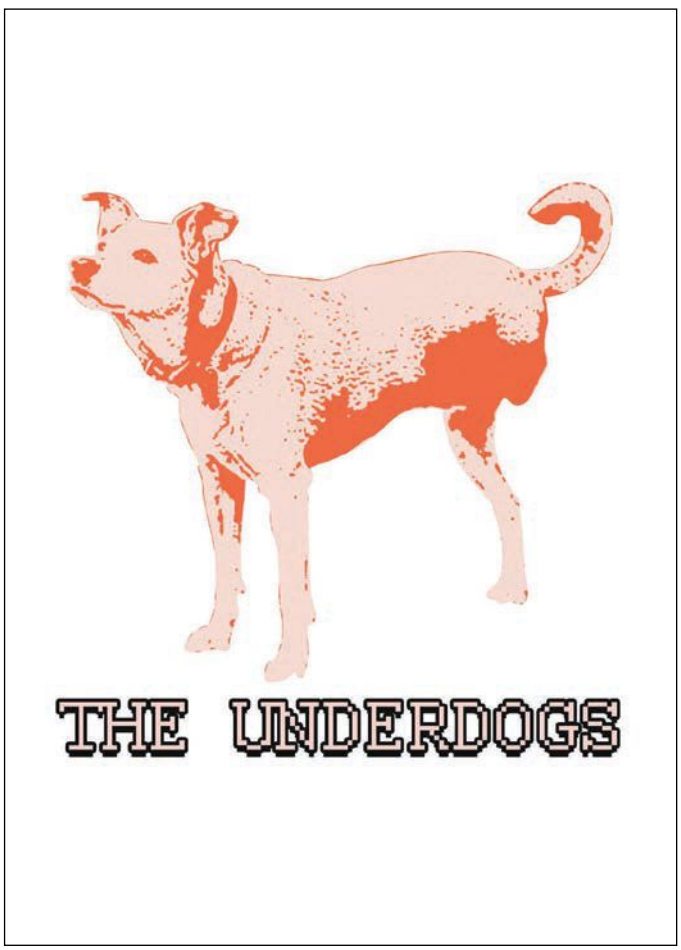
Austin rock group **Ume** have evolved sizably since the release of their 2011 debut album *Phantoms*, a collection of songs that aimed to translate the band's frenetic live performances into a recording. *Other Nature*, the foursome's latest, seems more content with existing as a separate entity than the stage shows, embracing a moodier, more introspective tone in its 10 tracks. "Two Years Sleep" is like a Yeah Yeah Yeahs B-side with churning guitars forming a backdrop for singer/guitarist **Lauren Larson**'s plaintive croon. "Fire in Your Hands" drags the tempo down even further, drawling out its melody to a crawl, even when the surge of guitars and drums comes pounding back in. It's not all so carefully paced, with tracks like "The Center" thumping up the energy but, for the most part, Ume seems interested in crafting an overall vibe rather than recreating live vigor. And largely, that works for them here. There are a few instances (like dulled-out indie number "Iris") where some of that liveliness would be welcome, but the atmospheric thoughtfulness is encompassing and interestingly layered, particularly on crooner "After the Show." The album comes to a close with "Underneath," a ballad-ish track plucked gently on an acoustic guitar. Larson wails "I will never ever be okay" as the song unfurls, a reminder that Ume's greatest strength has always been their ability to evoke emotional responses through the music. As the final track builds to a chaotic, raw climax, that sense of emotional urgency is palpable and compelling. ***Emily Zemler***

CBDB

Out of Line SELF-RELEASED

"We fall into patterns/ They overlap and they underline/ They make a method inside of madness/ They make you feel it's a real good time." **Cy Simonton** sings those lines at the very beginning of "Patterns," the opening track of **CBDB**'s third studio LP *Out of Line*. Those lyrics are a fitting invocation for this release and, furthermore, a great way to describe the band as a whole: a technically minded quintet hell-bent on keeping their music ready for the dance floor. *Out of Time* was recorded at Zac Brown's Southern Ground in Nashville. And despite the record's countrified locale, there's very little twang on this release—just high-energy, progressive-jam compositions like the sunbaked "Mumble Bull," the jamtronica-infused "Unintentional Lair" and the

The 3rd Annual
Suwannee Roots Revival
Four Days of Music, Art, Camping, Friends and Fun!!
October 11 - 14, 2018
Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park Live Oak, Florida
Oteil & Friends Leftover Salmon Donna the Buffalo
Keller Williams' PettyGrass Featuring The HillBenders
Peter Rowan Free Mexican Airforce Bruce Cockburn Seldom Scene
Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Samantha Fish Shinyribs Dustbowl Revival
Jim Lauderdale Verlon Thompson Rev. Jeff Mosier Jon Stickley Trio
The Grass Is Dead Joe Craven & The Sometimers
The Lonely Heartstring Band Jonathan Scales Fourchestra
The Lee Boys Katie Skene and Cosmic Kind Tornado Rider
Sauce Boss Belle and The Band Whetherman Sloppy Joe Quartermoon
Adventures of Annabelle Lyn Brett Bass and Melted Plectrum Corbitt Brothers
Nikki Talley The Dunehoppers L P T The Walker Family Band
SYZYGY David Gans - Artist At Large Jeff Bradley
Suwannee Spirit Kids Tania & Magic Moon Traveling Circus
Bill Monroe Shrine – Slopryland – Music Workshops
Dance Tent with Contra/Square/Waltz & More
Kids Stage and Activities – Food & Craft Vendors – Daily Yoga
SuwanneeRootsRevival.com



rocking closer "Feel So Far," which all get your toes tapping on one beat or another. Newest member **Mike Sinopole** proves his worth on the mid-album "Opelika Yella," where his basslines act as the tune's rock-solid foundation. That song also provides the album's best opportunity for extended jamming—still, none of the songs on *Out of Line* embody CBDB's wide-ranging influences quite like the penultimate "Fine Line." Given the song's blend of hard-rock guitar riffs and jazz-funk grooves, it's safe to assume Simonton and Sinopole, as well as **Kris Gottlieb** (guitar/vocals), **Glenn Dillard** (sax/keys and vocals) and **Paul Oliver** (drums) were raised on a healthy diet of Led Zeppelin and The Meters. The production is clean and layered; the sound is cohesive and feels like a unified front. If you haven't jumped on the CBDB train just yet, then now may be the time.
Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Ghost

Prequelle LOMA VISTA RECORDINGS

These campy hard-rockers have spent 12 years hiding their identities with ridiculous papal costumes and absurd stage characters, but their anonymity was part of their theatrical charm. Now, one year after an inter-band lawsuit led to the thematic unmasking of creative mastermind **Tobias Forge**, can the music retain any of the precious mystery their live show lost? Not really. But the most troubling development with **Ghost**'s fourth LP, *Prequelle*, isn't related to personnel (or Forge's newly unveiled character, Cardinal Copia), but an overall dumbing down of their music from proggy, arena-friendly metal into slick, gothic pop-rock—perhaps an expected move after they took home a 2016 Grammy for their 2015 single "Cirice." Forge structures the album loosely around destruction from the Black Plague (thus the song "Rats"), but the lyrics mostly focus on generically ghoulish sentiments like "Just wanna be/ Wanna bewitch you in the moonlight" and "Don't you forget about dying/ Don't you forget about your friend Death/ Don't you forget that you will die." There are glimpses of the old Ghost: the layered guitar harmonies of "See the Light," the whirring synth lines of "Miasma." But it's often difficult to discern how much of *Prequelle* is intended as a joke and how much of it wound up that way by accident. The worst offender is "Witch Image," a wispy cock-rocker that, were it not for the mild distortion and, ya know, lyrics about rotting flesh, could be adapted into a boy-band song. Ghost's haunting days appear to be behind them. *Ryan Reed*

Ear Crystals BY RICHARD GEHR

The search for other-world audio gems

Seasonal disorders. Russian electroacoustic musician **Kate Shilonosova**, who records as **Kate NV**, fabricated the contents of her second solo album, *FOR* (RVNG Intl.) in her Moscow apartment during last year's spring and fall. The record's springier, sproingier first half is all whirligigging marimba and synth sounds, a fantasia of frolicking particles; the autumnal latter half is slightly less playful. Marimbas and horn sounds mingle as the fog drifts through "HOW" (all of her titles are three-letter words in Russian and English), and she puts her gurgling reveries to rest in "WHO," which resembles a dreamy outtake from Eno's *Another Green World*.

Drumming up resistance. Percussionist and bandleader **Sunny Jain** elevates his pounding bhangra band **Red Baraat** to a more nuanced and artistically sophisticated space on *Sound the People* (Rhyme & Reason). In its new stripped-down sextet format, with hotshots like guitarist **Jonathan Goldberger** adding new dimensions of sonic info, the loud, raucous Punjabi wedding music of the group's earlier albums takes on extra wit, smarts and gravitas. The rapper **Heems** speaks for all immigrants in the title track's call to arms, and the luxurious acoustic meditation and universalist verses of "Vibrations" are echoed later in the album by comedian **John Hodgman** during colonialist critique "Punjaub March."

1980s lore. Who doesn't love good old-fashioned folktronica? Singer **Melina Ausikaitis**—who got the best line on **Joan of Arc**'s prior album with "Please be advised upon entry to my friendship/ You are consenting to be photographed"—steps definitively to the fore on the art rockers' new *1984* (Joyful Noise). Accompanied by spare electronics and subtle vocal distortions, she sings autobiographical songs about her wrong-side-of-the-tracks upbringing in a thick twang, with bandleader **Tim Kinsella** providing eerie offstage tweaks and distortions. Singer-songwriter **Odetta Hartman** blends dirt and digits to her own devices on *Old Rockhounds Never Die* (Northern Spy). She combines electronics, sound effects and acoustic instruments in a manner suggesting sepia photos with a weird neon glow.

Lepidopterist leaps in. The global migration pattern of a particularly peripatetic butterfly inspired composer, trumpeter and bandleader **Michael Leonhart**'s *The Painted Lady Suite* (Sunnyside). Flash soloists like guitarist **Nels Cline** and tenor saxophonist **Donny McCaslin** add flair to orchestral interpretations of Painted Lady swarms flying from the deserts of Mexico to the Arctic Circle to the Sahara Desert on wings of Leonhart's rich, elegant arrangements. Elsewhere, "Music Your Grandparents Would Like" nods to Frank Zappa's satiric nostalgia, while "The Girl From Udaipur" is an Ellingtonian romance set in India.

Exotica for the people. Appropriating culture before cultural appropriation became uncool, the exotica sound of the late-'50s to mid-'60s had both its hits (e.g., Martin Denny's "Quiet Village") and plenty of brilliant misses. The latter are collected on *Technicolor Paradise* (Numero Group), a triple-disk box of twangy surf guitar, sinuous keyboards, stratospheric crooners and the odd bit of vintage racist gibberish. B-list acts like **The Voodoos** (from Wisconsin), **The Blue Bells** (with future Mother of Invention **Elliot Ingber**) and **Five Glow Tones** cast a spell borrowing from the South Pacific, Middle East and someplace much closer to Hollywood Boulevard.

Stanley Clarke Band

The Message MACK AVENUE

The Message may be the most stylistically diverse album that **Stanley Clarke** has made to date—quite an achievement in itself, considering the massive volume of work the bassist has turned out, both as a leader and collaborator, over the past four-plus decades. But the range isn't the whole story; it would mean little if the quality didn't hold up. And it does, throughout. From "And Ya Know We're Missing You"—a slap-bass-heavy, super-funky co-write with rapper **Doug E. Fresh**, dedicated to departed inspirations from Chuck Berry and Tom Petty to Al Jarreau and Larry Coryell—to Clarke's solo meditation on a Bach cello suite, *The Message* is designed to spread out wide. This *is* a **Stanley Clarke Band** album—pianist **Beka Gochiashvili**, drummer **Mike Mitchell** and keyboardist **Cameron Graves** are all top-notch players—but Clarke's never far from front and center here. The reflective title track from Clarke and synth player **Pat Leonard**, is equal parts spare and orchestral; immediately following it, "Lost in a World" expands the list of invitees to include guitar, voices and more. It's quiet and heavenly and makes just as much sense in the album's context as the penetrating fusion of "The Rugged Truth" and the Latinesque rhythm of "Alternative Facts." It's a given that the bass playing is uniformly jaw-dropping all over *The Message*—the same mix of technique and unbound creativity that powered Clarke in his Return to Forever days is in every groove here. That he can still apply that ingenuity to everything he does is nothing short of remarkable.
Jeff Tamarkin

T. Hardy Morris

Dude, the Obscure

NORMALTOWN/NEW WEST

T. Hardy Morris named his third solo album *Dude, the Obscure* as an homage to Thomas Hardy's 1895 novel *Jude, the Obscure*, a book that tackled themes of class struggle and religious identity. Deep stuff. Hardy's latest isn't as heady as that, but still dives into subjects that the Dead Confederate co-founder has touched on in the past, but never to this extent. Like his previous solo albums, he's still favoring country-folk arrangements, this time with help from the musical couple of Deer Tick's **John McCauley** and **Vanessa Carlton** on backing vocals.

The result is something shockingly great, if you're in a certain sort of mood. Throughout the album's 11 tracks, Morris sounds like a broken man on his way to recovery, in both the spiritual sense and with the rest of the world. Throughout tracks like "Cheating Life, Living Death" he mostly repeats the song title over the course of four minutes, like a spiritual chant to a higher power (or himself). On the upbeat, warped rocker "Homemade Bliss," his nasally croon shines through as he confesses, "Call it content, call it ignorance/ I call it homemade bliss/ And I love you."

The album's standout song is the soft ballad "The Night Everything Changed," a pedal-steel lined number that could be about a broken love or a broken band: Morris's voice sounds nostalgic, as he recalls different cities and different benders that clearly left a mark for the future. But paradoxically, *Dude, the Obscure* is just the opposite, as it feels like an album made from a songwriter finding new ground and a new path ahead.
Mike Ayers

Charles Lloyd & The Marvels Featuring Lucinda Williams

Vanished Gardens BLUE NOTE

Although it may seem random, there were preexisting connections that led to **Lucinda Williams** contributing vocals to the second album by the jazz saxophonist/flute master **Charles Lloyd** and his Americana-centric group **The Marvels.** They met about two years ago through the group's guitarists, **Bill Frisell** and **Greg Leisz**, who'd already worked with Williams, and did some mutual sitting in that quickly led to the realization that Lloyd and Williams wanted to pursue the collaboration more fully. It's a good fit for both. With bassist **Reuben Rogers** and drummer **Eric Harland** filling out the lineup, Lloyd and the group transcend the traditional accompanist role and bring added depth and direction to the five tunes she sings. Among those is "Dust," which Williams

adapted from a poem written by her late father, Miller Williams. She recorded it previously (with Frisell and Leisz) for her 2016 album *The Ghosts of Highway 20* but here, Lloyd's calming presence brings a more soulful, less hardened touch to the tribute. "Angel," the Jimi Hendrix staple, is already sinfully delicious during the Lloyd-Frisell intro; Williams' vocals take it to an earthy place that she and fellow Southerner Lloyd understand innately. Half of the album does not feature Williams, and those five tracks are equally sublime: The title track heads to an outside zone quickly, then gives each player all the space he needs to push even further. But "Monk's Mood," which is simply Lloyd and Frisell in conversation sans the others, is just as effective. Just how great would a duet set from those two be?

Jeff Tamarkin

Lucero

Among the Ghosts

LIBERTY & LAMENT/THIRTY TIGERS

After nine albums and 20 years in the game, the core members of Memphis rock outfit **Lucero** still deserve a lot more recognition than they get. It starts with frontman and firebrand **Ben Nichols**, whose throaty rasp and folksy demeanor belie a Southern gothic worldview that's richly steeped in the rebel loner's elixir of whiskey, women and the open road. Marriage and fatherhood have mellowed Nichols some, at times giving *Among the Ghosts* the contemplative air of a personal statement along the lines of *The Last Pale Light in the West*, the 2009 solo outing he crafted around Cormac McCarthy's bleak, unforgiving novel *Blood Meridian*. On "Everything Has Changed," he taps into a dark country vein, chased by drink and the devil, but the inspirational "To My Dearest Wife" stands out, told in the voice of a Civil War soldier, with the band surging behind him like comrades-in-arms on a battlefield. Throughout the album, Lucero comes across as tight-knit and tasteful; lead guitarist **Brian Venables**'s solo on "Cover Me" immediately heightens the song's trance-rock energy, while **Rick Steff**'s buttery organ riffs on "Long Way Back Home" accentuate a deep and unshakable sense of longing. Nichols has often cited his love of Tom Petty and Lucero continues to live up to that lofty standard, with Nichols leading the charge. ***Bill Murphy***

Groundation

The Next Generation BACO RECORDS

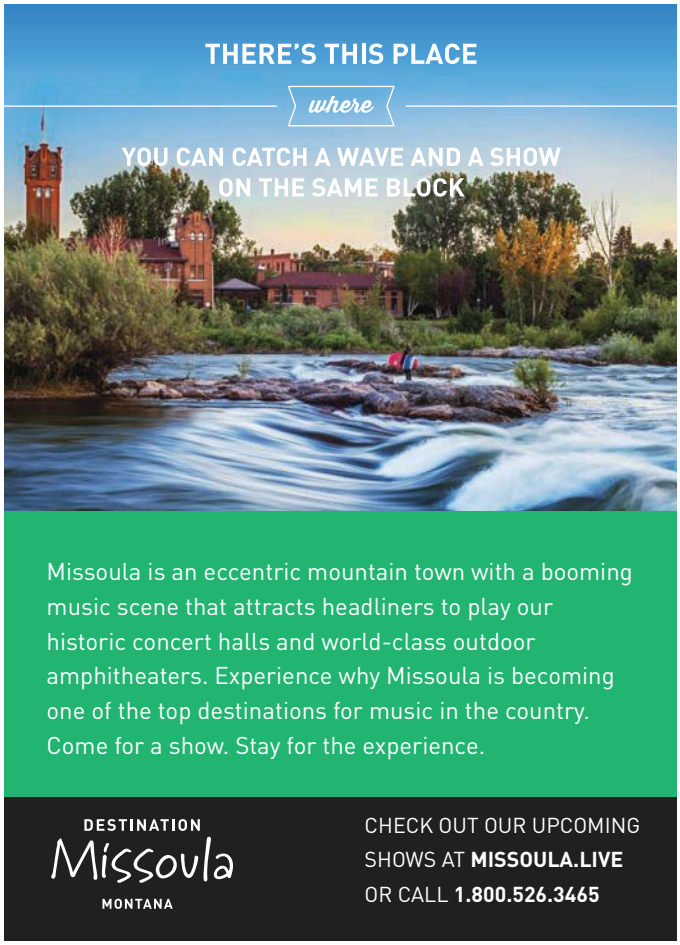
A companion piece to 2014's *A Miracle*, **Groundation**'s latest, *The Next Generation*, focuses on the trials and tribulations of growing up in the modern world. Though the album's lyrics remain its lynchpins, the 12 layered horns on album opener "Vanity" weave into a tapestry of reggae-infused motifs that will stick with you. Listen closely and you'll find yourself sinking into a certain kind of sonic graininess; it turns out that the entire record was recorded on '70s-era analog equipment. Lead singer **Harrison Stafford** is confident and present throughout the 11 tracks, and considering the *The Next Generation*'s overall theme of youth and the challenges therein, he's not afraid to get political. On "New Life," Stafford channels the plight of a "refugee from Sudan on a boat looking for dry land," "the orphaned Syrian waiting for the opportunity of a new life" and many more, all accompanied by the militaristic snare drum of governments with ulterior motives. "We have to focus on the prophets of life, not profit in life," he commands in "Prophets & Profit," criticizing prison systems and systemic greed. It's not all pessimism, though. The closing tune "Father & Child" is a meditation on parenthood. Angelic backing vocalists urge the titular father to "lead the way" for his innocent child, and give his little one "strength to survive in these troubling times." If you've read a newspaper lately, then *The Next Generation* seems to gain relevance on a daily basis. When Bob Marley was once asked about the political nature of his music he replied, "You say dabble in politics? I don't know what that is. You say stand up and talk for my rights? I know what that is." On *The Next Generation*, Groundation channels Marley's words. Without ever preaching, there's never a moment on this record where you don't know where Stafford stands.

Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Neil and Liam Finn

Lightsleeper INERTIA

In recent months, the big Finn news was surely the recruitment of **Neil**—the longtime Crowded House mastermind—into Fleetwood Mac, replacing (at least on this year's tour) the canned Lindsey Buckingham. How that will work out remains to be seen, but surely if the Mac wanted someone who could match Buckingham's natural gift for melody and harmony, they went to the right place. But that's not the only thing happening in Finn-world. New Zealand's greatest rock star has also made a record with his son, **Liam**, an active musician with a growing résumé and positive reviews to match. Neil and Liam have, inexplicably, never before worked together on a project of their own, and so they've finally found their way into a studio to do just that. Needless to say, pop melody abounds here: It's not a Finn record unless you can hum along to it. Liam's sensibilities


THERE'S THIS PLACE
where
YOU CAN CATCH A WAVE AND A SHOW
ON THE SAME BLOCK
Missoula is an eccentric mountain town with a booming music scene that attracts headliners to play our historic concert halls and world-class outdoor amphitheaters. Experience why Missoula is becoming one of the top destinations for music in the country. Come for a show. Stay for the experience.
DESTINATION
Missoula
MONTANA
CHECK OUT OUR UPCOMING SHOWS AT MISSOULA.LIVE
OR CALL 1.800.526.3465

TENTH ANNUAL
11.2 THRU 11.4, 2018
BURNET, TX
UTOPIAfest
DOWN IN THE OAKS
STS9
PATTY GRIFFIN
LUKAS NELSON & PROMISE OF THE REAL
GRANDMASTER FLASH · VALERIE JUNE · KELLER WILLIAMS
JOHN MEDESKI'S MAD SKILLET · RUBBLEBUCKET
KELLER WILLIAMS' PETTYGRASS FEAT. THE HILLBENDERS
THE BIG OL' NASTY GETDOWN · LISA LEBLANC · BASKERY
CHOIR!CHOIR!CHOIR! · ALL WE ARE · THE DEER · PARTICLE KID
UTOPIA PLAYERS · HIKES · CALLIOPE MUSICALS · SID FLY
HARD PROOF · MIXER ROGERS · DAWN AND HAWKES · THE BLUE HIT
KALU & THE ELECTRIC JOINT · OBSOLETE MACHINES · MIDDLESPOON
TROUBLE IN THE STREETS · GLASS CANNON · THE BROTHER BROTHERS
POPE COKE · SAN ANTONIO PIPES AND DRUMS · MOVING MATTER
SHANE COOLEY · SYNTHEMESC · ALEXALCO · COWBOY IRIE
*THURSDAY PRE-PARTY ONLY
www.utopiafest.com

are not entirely those of his dad's; the plethora of electronics and what a press release describes as "lo-fi atmospherics" are more Liam's bent than Neil's, and the joy of the resulting recording is how they've managed to sew it together so seamlessly. An early gem is "Meet Me in the Air," a dreamy, floating tune that's reminiscent of the Beach Boys' "'Til I Die" melodically, although it's miles away from it lyrically. And "Back to Life," the first single, darts this way and that, without ever losing the sing-song charm at its root. **Mick Fleetwood** sits in on three tunes, but this one's all about Finn family values. *Jeff Tamarkin*

JUke
Live & Fired SELF-RELEASED

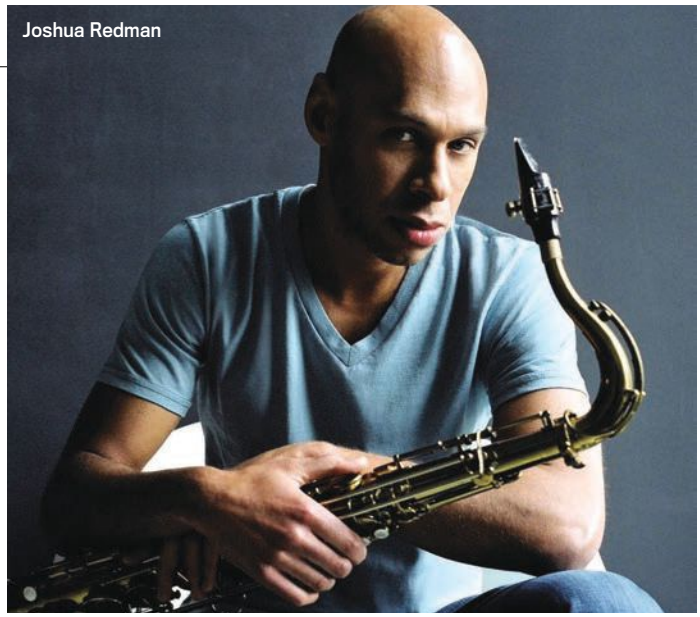
JUke were birthed in the neon glow of Miami, but listening to their down and dirty post-blues, they sound more akin to the Spanish moss-covered swamps of the Southeast. Their new live release, *Live & Fired*, is best paired with hot weather, some sort of fried seafood and a liquor-drenched concoction in a mason jar; in the words of frontman **Eric Garcia** on the album's second track: "Now that I've tasted blood, now this wine seems too thin." Garcia and his harmonica act as JUke's centerpiece for most of this high-octane release—also featuring guitarist **Sonny East**, bassist **Marcel Salas** and drummer **Korian Hannah**—and the band's rollicking rockabilly vibes permeate *Live & Fired* to an infectious degree. Each member shines on the over 14-minute, John Lee Hooker-inspired "Burning Hell," taking one solo after another. It's impressive how JUke always manage to find their groove, and the rhythm section in particular—Hannah with his machine-gun snare drum and Salas with his space-age bass work—might as well leap from your sound system into your living room. The entire LP was recorded at The Wynwood Yard in Miami, a venue where Garcia was working as a booking agent. The singer/harmonicist has since been let go, inspiring the record's tongue-in-cheek yet entirely accurate title, *Live & Fired*. It's a rock-and-roll story from front to back, just four guys playing loud and proud. "Everything I play, goin' be funky from now on," Garcia trumpets halfway through the album. As long as JUke keep that promise, they'll be burning down stages for a long time to come. *Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta*

Django Festival AllStars
Attitude Manouche
RESILIENCE MUSIC ALLIANCE

For the past 18 years, at the venerable jazz club Birdland, the Django Reinhardt New York Festival has honored the contribution of the Gypsy guitar legend. Then, this past May, the concept moved into a larger venue, Carnegie Hall, where guitarist **Dorado Schmitt**, who's helmed the show all along, was joined by younger members of his family intent on keeping the tradition going. *Attitude Manouche* is the first studio release by the next-generation group, calling itself the **Django Festival AllStars** and led by guitarist **Samson Schmitt**, Dorado's son. (The group also features strings, accordion, guitar and double bass.) The first thing you notice when surveying the track list is that there isn't a single tune written by Django Reinhardt. In fact, save for one, John Williams' theme from *Schindler's List*, the entire collection consists of original numbers written by the band members—the idea here was never to mimic Django, a fool's game anyway, but rather to take his ideas into the present day. That's not to imply this music isn't Django-esque. Schmitt's style, like his father's, owes directly to the band's namesake, and it's evident in every tune, from the swift picking of the title track to the lazy-day ballads like "Nocturne." Samson Schmitt is the band's star, but each player is a whiz, as evidenced by the accordion and violin showcases that populate much of "Around Toots" and the thrilling orchestration of the Williams cover. *Jeff Tamarkin*

Lera Lynn
Plays Well With Others SINGLE LOCK

If more proof was needed that **Lera Lynn** has quickly come into her own, then all it takes is a glimpse at the list of musicians that grace her newest offering, the aptly dubbed *Plays Well With Others*. A true collaborative effort in every regard, the special guests—**John Paul White**, **Dylan LeBlanc**, **JD McPherson**, **Andrew Combs**, **Rodney Crowell**, **Shovels & Rope**, **Nicole Atkins** and **Peter Bradley Adams**—not only opted for cameos, but also fully participated in co-writing the songs. Recorded live at White's Alabama studios, it's something of a surprise in other ways as well, particularly given the mournful tones that resonate throughout, beginning with the Adams collaboration, "Same Old Song" and the tentative croak of a vocal White adds to the intro "Lose Myself." One might have expected a more joyful circumstance considering the superb cast of collaborators but, clearly, Lynn and company were also intent on ploughing the deeper emotions that reside at the core. Lynn's success comes with keeping the consistency, despite the disparate designs. She also succeeds in keeping her presence front and center, never allowing herself to be overshadowed by those who rank higher on the marquee. The simple strains of "What Is Love" (her duet with LeBlanc), the low key ambiance of TV on the Radio's "Wolf Like Me" (featuring Shovels & Rope), and the acoustic strum of "Crimson Underground" (Crowell's contribution),


Joshua Redman

maintain a decidedly low register, suggesting that these songs were written in back porch environs. Indeed, there's something to be said for play and repose shared in equal measure. *Lee Zimmerman*

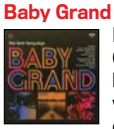
Joshua Redman
Still Dreaming NONESUCH

Joshua Redman would probably prefer that you don't call *Still Dreaming*—on which cornetist **Ron Miles**, bassist **Scott Colley** and drummer **Brian Blade** accompany the saxophonist—a tribute album, but it's understandable if you find yourself doing so. The album is inspired by Old and New Dreams, a jazz quartet led by Joshua's late father, fellow saxophonist Dewey Redman, from 1976-1987. That earlier group also featured cornetist Don Cherry, drummer Ed Blackwell and bassist Charlie Haden—all of them alumni of Ornette Coleman's bands—and, in terms of its openness and exploratory nature, *Still Dreaming* undeniably refers to what its antecedents were up to. But that's really as far as the comparisons go. While two of its eight tracks, Haden's "Playing" and Coleman's "Comme Il Faut," are borrowed from the elders, the other six are newly written by Redman and his colleagues. "New Year," the Colley-penned opening number, relies on Coleman's patented harmolodic technique and gives the rhythm section free rein, yet the piece stops short of stepping out of bounds in the way that Coleman and Old and New Dreams might have. "Blues for Charlie" eases in with a restrained Redman solo run, takes on an added dimension when Colley counters him and ultimately finds its groove when Miles stretches out midway. The other tunes, including "Unanimity" and "The Rest," range dramatically in mood and tempo, but if there's a strong resemblance to Ornette and co., then it's primarily in spirit, not sound. *Jeff Tamarkin*

Shemekia Copeland
America's Child ALLIGATOR

Two decades after her debut, **Shemekia Copeland**, inspired by the birth of her son, takes a bold step with *America's Child*, a collection of songs that confront the realities of life in our country today. These are anthems but not finger-pointers; Copeland makes her stance plain in the opening track, "Ain't Got Time for Hate" while "The Wrong Idea," a churning rocker, addresses #MeToo—that "clown at the end of the bar, staring at us a little too hard" will get an earful any second now, you can be sure. And when Copeland makes it known in "Americans" that inclusion does indeed mean everybody, she lays it out so unambiguously that only the most hardheaded hater would find anything to argue about. Copeland is willing to bust out of her comfort zone if that's what it takes to get the message across, but she never fully leaves the blues behind: The folky ballad "Smoked Ham and Peaches," featuring album producer **Will Kimbrough** on National guitar and **Rhiannon Giddens** on African banjo, smells like country air; "In the Blood of the Blues" manages to deliver a stridence-free history lesson with sweat and fury; and "Great Rain," co-written by **John Prine**, is a swampy, dawdling snapshot that gets its guts from the dual guitars of Kimbrough and **Al Perkins**, and its glory from Copeland and Prine's vocal sparring. The Kinks' "I'm Not Like Everybody Else" might seem like an odd choice but it's a fit, with Copeland bringing a toughness to it that leaves no doubt that she's not kidding around. *Jeff Tamarkin*

The Love Language
Baby Grand MERGE



In the late 2000s, North Carolina native **Stuart McLamb** swept up fans with his endearingly earnest but undeniably sweet lo-fi guitar pop. The magic

was in its simplicity: jangling guitars, crackling drums and McLamb's wide-eyed vocals. Now, five years after his last album, *Ruby Red*, the singer-songwriter is back with a collection just as lovelorn and heartfelt as anything he's ever released. But this time, he's blasting his musical vision widescreen—*Baby Grand* is pure maximalist indie-pop, flooded with reverb and filled with towering guitars, slinky synthesizers, crisp, speed-racing percussion and McLamb's most lung-filling choruses to date. It's a new ride for **The Love Language**, and wickedly fun.

Baby Grand doesn't waste a minute. Opener "Frames" starts with exactly 10 seconds of snarling feedback before exploding like flowers in spring: a cascading, xylophone-like synth melody blossoms atop pummeling guitars and drums. It's not all pop turned up to 11, though. "Juiceboxx" is a deliciously funky New Wave jam, with McLamb crooning sexy come-ons in echoing falsetto: "I had a biter, she would fight until the death/ I'd lay beside her, but we never caught our breath."

Even on tunes that harken back to McLamb's lo-fi pop past, he shines up the production and transforms what could've been a minor victory into a majestic win. "Let Your Hair Down" is lush, chamber pop for a lonely morning: "I awoke with a knot in my chest the size of Los Angeles/ And I can't stop believing that you'll come back." As far as heartbreak goes, McLamb's is electrified and exquisite. *Justin Jacobs*

Elvin Bishop's Big Fun Trio

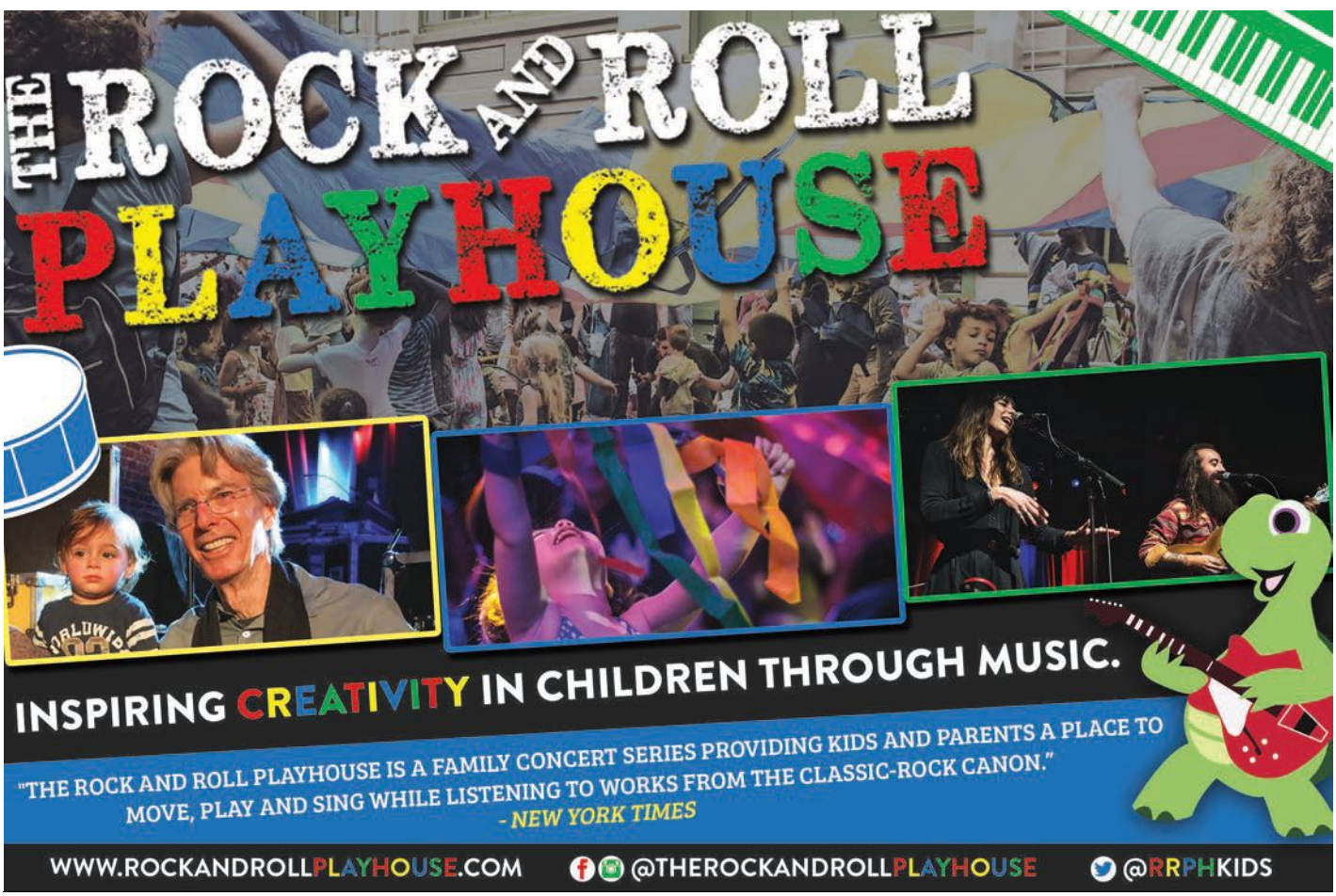
Something Smells Funky 'Round Here ALLIGATOR

When **Elvin Bishop** got together in 2015 with guitarist/pianist **Bob Welsh** and **Willy Jordan** on cajón (a box-shaped hand drum), the guitarist/vocalist had such a blast with the stripped-down formula that he named his new outfit the **Big Fun Trio**. With the release of their self-titled album in 2017, Big Fun Trio garnered critical acclaim and a Grammy nomination. Now, they're back with round two and it's as much fun as the first. The formula couldn't be any simpler: Write some smart new tunes, dip into the well for some favorites penned by others and don't fuss; just go into the studio and lay them down. That doesn't mean it's a goof. The title track, which opens the album, has a couple of things to say about race relations and politics. ("This country is ours, we gotta respect it/ The guy we've got in charge I believe he's wrecked it.") But mostly, it's all about the easy-going blues and soul that Bishop's been hawking since he left the Paul Butterfield Blues Band decades ago: You don't have to be a farmer to know that Dave Bartholomew and Fats Domino's "Another Mule," shuffling along at a loping pace, isn't, well, about a mule, and if Bishop talks his way through his own "Lookin' Good" more than sings it, then you'll still want to pay attention. Toss in pitch-perfect covers of Jackie Wilson's "Higher and Higher" and Ann Peebles' "I Can't Stand the Rain," and you bet you're gonna have as good a time listening as they did making it. *Jeff Tamarkin*

Frank Turner

Be More Kind XTRA MILE

More than your average outspoken British folk-punk singer, **Frank Turner** has had a pretty wild ride since his post-screamo band Million Dead disintegrated in a torrent of acrimony back in 2005. He somehow managed to pull from the ashes an impressive string of solo albums, including the pub-rousing *England Keep My Bones*, while he struggled with the rigors of touring, partying, binge-drinking and generally making a beast of himself. Then in 2012, the *Guardian* published a harsh compendium of interview quotes that seemed to reveal Turner's right-wing politics (turns out he's really a John Stuart Mill-style libertarian), which elicited numerous death threats in the lead-up to his fifth and perhaps most-confessional album, *Tape Deck Heart*. Now a bit older and wiser, Turner has ditched the ardent provocateur for the more tempered troubadour, and it suits him snugly. As a writ-large rumination on the current polarized state of the world, *Be More Kind*—which, tellingly, was tracked and produced by the ever-versatile Niles City Sound crew in Fort Worth, Texas—is a multivalent manifesto, from the uplifting "Brave Face" (with churchy chorus led by Nashville-based singer **Bonnie Bishop**) to his Beatles-influenced "21st Century Survival Blues." Meanwhile, **The Sleeping Souls**, Turner's longtime backing band, deliver the full spectrum of power-punk ("1933"), acoustic boogie (on the not-overly-didactic title cut) and Britpop-inflected rock ("Blackout") with crisp precision. Turner might wax a bit too schmaltzy on cuts like the unironic anthem "Make America Great Again," but you can almost forgive him the slip; no matter his opinions or his politics, he never fails to come across as earnest, edgy and informed. *Bill Murphy*


THE ROCK AND ROLL PLAYHOUSE
INSPIRING CREATIVITY IN CHILDREN THROUGH MUSIC.
"THE ROCK AND ROLL PLAYHOUSE IS A FAMILY CONCERT SERIES PROVIDING KIDS AND PARENTS A PLACE TO MOVE, PLAY AND SING WHILE LISTENING TO WORKS FROM THE CLASSIC-ROCK CANON."
- NEW YORK TIMES
WWW.ROCKANDROLLPLAYHOUSE.COM
@THEROCKANDROLLPLAYHOUSE
@RRPHKIDS

PLUNDERING THE VAULTS

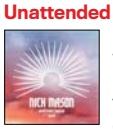
Graham Nash

Over the Years RHINO

It's always instructive to have a window opened into a songwriter's process—at their best, composers' demos can spark new understandings or even a complete reevaluation of a long-familiar song. Fortunately, **Graham Nash**'s demos have been carefully stored away and now many of them, including a dozen of previously unreleased tracks, have been gathered together, juxtaposed against a disc's worth of Nash's most treasured tunes. Because they are so familiar, most longtime fans will have the tracks on disc one embedded permanently in the skull: officially released tunes by **CSN**, **CSNY**, **Crosby-Nash** and Nash solo. As a tidy greatest-hits collection, you can't do better, but that's not the big story here. The news begins with track one on disc two, Nash's demo for "Marrakesh Express," recorded solo with only acoustic guitar accompaniment in London in 1968. It's this very demo, rejected by The Hollies, that caused Nash to leave the group—and England—and take off for LA, and hearing it now only makes one wonder what The Hollies were thinking. Both "Pre-Road Downs" and "Teach Your Children," cut a year later, also by Nash sans other musicians, are fascinating in their nakedness, albeit admittedly begging for the embellishment they would soon receive. "Our House," with Nash playing piano, projects the same intimacy as the finished version and is quite moving in its simplicity. Several later songs, among them "Just a Song Before I Go" and "Wasted on the Way," reveal that Nash hadn't adjusted his approach all that much—he still preferred to lay out his own interpretations with minimal outside help before allowing a song to blossom in the studio with the valued contributions of friends. *Jeff Tamarkin*

Nick Mason

Unattended Luggage RHINO



Not every drummer can follow the Phil Collins path: moving from behind the kit to behind the mic, carving out a solo career as a singer-songwriter. **Nick Mason** clearly never aspired to. His erratic work outside of Pink Floyd began as a lark and maintained a similarly low-stakes approach. *Unattended Luggage* collects the first three albums bearing the percussionist's name, even if the marquee treatment is a bit misleading. His 1981 debut, *Nick Mason's Fictitious Sports*, is essentially a solo album from jazz keyboardist/composer **Carla Bley**, who wrote all the material and instigated the project. Regardless, it's the pinnacle of the Mason catalog, conjuring a funkier "Pink Floyd as produced by Frank Zappa, laced with a touch of Canterbury Scene" wackiness. Fittingly, The Soft Machine co-founder **Robert Wyatt** lends his quirky presence throughout—including the psychedelic, sax-heavy blues of "Siam" to the avant funk-rock of "I Was Wrong," a rumination on UFO revelations. Sadly, Mason's work was never as unique when he started co-writing the songs: *Profiles*, an equally billed collaboration with 10cc guitarist **Rick Fenn**, gets bogged down in cheesy '80s synth tones and electronic drum doodles, though a vintage vocal appearance from Pink Floyd's **David Gilmour** perks up the synth-pop single "Lie for Lie." Mason and Fenn reunited on the *White of the Eye* soundtrack, exploring everything from Vangelis-like synth ambience ("Present") to Stratocaster soloing ("Remember Mike") to horrifically digified country-rock ("Globe"). No, they're not all winners. (Hey, there's always *Dark Side of the Moon*.) But *Unattended Luggage* is still worth claiming—if only for pure fascination's sake. *Ryan Reed*

Jeremy Enigk

Return of the Frog Queen

Reissue SUB POP

Many viewed it as back-to-back career suicides. Sunny Day Real Estate, the newly anointed "kings of emo," dismantled at their peak of influence, after issuing their challenging 1995 album *LP2*, also known as "The Pink Album." Then **Jeremy Enigk**, the band's enigmatic frontman, moved forward with a project that absolutely zero Sunny Day fans were pining for: a song cycle inspired by Tom Waits, the soundtrack to *Popeye* by Harry Nilsson, Mozart and Beethoven. But if Enigk closed a door on his emo past with 1996's *Return of the Frog Queen*, then he certainly opened another. The record, with its ramshackle orchestrations and introspective lyrics, showcased a previously untapped side of his personality—the searcher, the mystic. "Abegail Anne" opens with a lo-fi acoustic strum and a pair of rough-hewn vocal harmonies, building to a homespun symphonic rock crescendo. It's the same sort of unfiltered emotion that he churned up with his former band—only a different execution and aesthetic. *Frog Queen* was a radical detour 22 years ago, but its artful approach now feels like a natural starting point for Enigk's solo career—and a precursor of sorts to the modern bedroom-recorded indie-rock movement. (Think of the raw DNA this album shares with, say, Sufjan Stevens' early work.) "Magic majesty, gaze glow and rowing under silver stars," Enigk sings on the intimate "Lewis Hollow." It's an apt description for a lost classic that's finally earning its due. *Ryan Reed*

Grateful Dead

Dave's Picks, Volume 26: Albuquerque Civic Auditorium, Albuquerque, NM 11/17/71 RHINO

The Grateful Dead were all about the new in the fall of 1971. **Keith Godchaux**, their recently inducted pianist, had just wrapped his first tour, and already he'd become an essential shaper of their still-evolving sound—he was there to stay. There were new songs too—plenty of them. Some had just been released on the self-titled live album that's come to be known as "Skull and Roses;" others would make their way to *Europe '72* and forthcoming solo albums. This November 1971 gig was their first-ever in New Mexico and they were on fire from the show-opening "Truckin'" all the way through to the closing "Not Fade Away"> "Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad." Between those familiar flashpoints are a handful of tunes that wouldn't last long in their shows—covers of Kris Kristofferson's "Me and Bobby McGee" and Hank Williams' "You Win Again" among them—but things really boil over after the break, when the band puts everything they've got into the new raver "One More Saturday Night," and the freshly minted "Wharf Rat," the latter coming out of a for-the-ages "The Other One"> "Me and My Uncle" jam. The New Mexico show only occupies two discs, so *DP26* is fleshed out with an Ann Arbor, Mich., show from the following month. Although many of the tunes played are repeats from the November show, the big difference here is the return of **Pigpen** to the lineup after one of his medical absences. Although he only sings lead on a few songs (Chuck Berry's seasonal "Run Rudolph Run" among them), it's a reminder of where the Dead were coming from, even while they were clearly on their way to parts unknown. *Jeff Tamarkin*

Gillian Welch

Soul Journey ACONY

Like Bob Dylan did in the mid-'60s, **Gillian Welch** and **David Rawlings** joined with a rhythm section on 2003's *Soul Journey* to record some of their most indelible songs. Cut from an analog master and pressed for the first time to vinyl by the duo's own label, Acony, the album's 15th anniversary reissue offers a beautiful way to revisit a landmark of contemporary folk music. Though the "two-person band named 'Gillian Welch'" (as the pair have long described themselves) had gone electric before, and would do so again (mostly in their Dave Rawlings Machine spin-off), *Soul Journey* shines brightest when the pair plays unaccompanied, a solemn and assured setting for Welch's ghost of a voice and Rawlings's sublime lead guitar. Paradoxically, perhaps, the album's opening track and the closest the two have come to writing a modern standard, "Look at Miss Ohio," is not among these, with drums emerging metronomically like someone's idea of how to perk up their perfectly gothic Americana. The duo's last album as "Gillian Welch" for eight years, *Soul Journey* makes it hard to tell where the folk adaptations stop and the original songs start, as on "No One

David Rawlings and Gillian Welch

Knows My Name" (an original, with the gentle addition of banjo and fiddle) or "I Had a Real Good Mother and Father" (traditional, with new lyrics by Welch), whose lyrics echo one another. *Soul Journey* makes it equally hard to tell where the past ended and the present began, or remember why anybody ever thought there was a difference.
Jesse Jarnow

Curved Air
Phantasmagoria (2-CD Expanded Edition)
ESOTERIC RECORDINGS

This innovative yet underrated prog-rock act couldn't maintain a consistent lineup for two consecutive albums, so it's shocking that they ever arrived at a signature sound. But 1972's *Phantasmagoria*, **Curved Air**'s experimental third LP, is the moment that their vision crystalized, harnessing the chemistry of **Sonja Kristina**'s robust vocals, **Darryl Way**'s classical violin, **Francis Monkman**'s psychedelic keyboards and synth, **Mike Wedgwood**'s soulful bass, **Florian Pilkington-Miksa**'s jazzy drums and an expansive crew of session musicians on brass and tuned percussion. Each member brought a unique element to the group: Kristina's acoustic ballad "Melinda (More or Less)" showcases her folk influence; tracks like "Cheetah" allow Way to parade his formally structured, virtuoso string talents; and Monkman, who dominates the album's wild second side, stretches out from classical synth madness ("Ultra-Vivaldi") to electronic experimentation ("Whose Shoulder Are You Looking Over Anyway?") to a nearly nine-minute prog epic that draws equally from Frank Zappa and the Canterbury scene ("Over and Above"). Esoteric's two-disc reissue, personally remastered by Monkman, includes a DVD of vintage live footage (including an Austrian TV performance) and a trio of rarities: the dated psych-pop single "Sarah's Concern" and two previously unreleased, foreign-language versions (an Italian version of "Melinda (More or Less)" and a French "Marie Antoinette"). But you never needed extra reason to explore *Phantasmagoria*, an album as colorful as the dreamlike title suggests.
Ryan Reed

Grateful Dead
Pacific Northwest '73-'74: The Complete Recordings DEAD.NET

The first thing you notice when looking over the track list of this 19-CD boxed set—166 tunes in all—is how few surprises there are. At this point in their history, the **Grateful Dead** were not in a particularly adventurous or playful mood, material-wise. With few exceptions, nearly everything here will be familiar to even the most casual Deadhead. Perhaps the reticence was because they'd just lost Pigpen, a founding member and the soul of the band, a few months earlier. **Keith** and **Donna Godchaux** were now firmly entrenched in the lineup, but Mickey Hart was in the midst of his four-year hiatus, and although there were some fine new tunes finding their way into the sets ("Eyes of the World," "Stella Blue"), the Dead were in a holding pattern: This was a very different band than the GD of even two years prior and, at the end of October '74, they'd begin a yearlong refueling break, during which they'd play only a few shows. That doesn't mean these six '73-'74 shows—two each in Vancouver, Seattle and Portland, Ore., totaling three per year—lack in quality. Predictability aside, there are beyond-stellar moments throughout the series and you don't have to look hard to find them either. Extended takes on foundational tunes like "He's Gone" and "Weather Report Suite"—not to mention the justifiably lauded 47-minute, fusionesque "Playing in the Band"—prove that the band hadn't lost any of its inventive spark. Not everything here reaches for the stars—too often there's a dearth of fervor, as if they're distracted—but there's more than enough that flirts with the spectacular to make the full boxed set a worthwhile indulgence. (For those who can't commit though, a three-disc compilation is also available.)
Jeff Tamarkin

Buffalo Springfield
What's That Sound? Complete Albums Collection RHINO

Buffalo Springfield remain rock's most famous "before" photos, its most important stepping stone and its most crucial launching pad. But the three albums that **Neil Young**, **Stephen Stills** and Poco's **Richie Furay** made in this short-lived psych/folk-rock act, collected here on Rhino's remastered box set, are worth rediscovering on their own merits. *What's That Sound?* compiles stereo mixes of 1966's *Buffalo Springfield*, 1967's *Buffalo Springfield Again* and 1968's *Last Time Around*, along with essential mono mixes of the first two. The records themselves are full of scattershot brilliance, showcasing the evolution of three distinct songwriters. The self-titled LP is mostly shackled to its era, drawing on obvious British Invasion and early garage/psych vibes: "Go and Say Goodbye," to highlight one clear theft, sounds a suspicious amount like The Beatles' country-rock gallop on "I Don't Want to Spoil the Party." A few anthems rise past the "period piece" label, notably Stills' chiming hit "For What It's Worth" and Young's blissful ballad "Out of My Mind," featuring some of the most divine vocal harmonies of its era. *Buffalo Springfield Again* is a more uniform piece of work, rising above their formative influences and forging ahead into harder, folkier and more deeply psychedelic sounds. (Still, Young couldn't help but rip off the entire main riff from The Rolling Stones' "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" on "Mr. Soul.") The band was disintegrating by *Last Time Around*, as the erratic track list proves—but even this overlooked LP is littered with gems, including Furay's haunting, heavily orchestrated "The Hour of Not Quite Rain." ***Ryan Reed***

Phish
9/18/99, Coors Amphitheatre, Chula Vista, California LIVEPHISH

Few songs excite **Phish** fans more than a prime "Tweezer." Kick off a show with it? It's guaranteed to be a hot night. Such was the case when Phish rolled into Chula Vista, Calif., on the eighth show of their Fall '99 tour and their first-ever performance in this San Diego suburb. And the 15-minute "Tweezer" opener certainly served as a harbinger for the hot show that followed: The first set alone contained a punchy "Roses Are Free," an amped-up "Wilson"> "Maze" combination and an almost 11-minute "Tube" that oozed echoes of '97-era funk. The second set jumped into action with a rare "Boogie on Reggae Woman" opener that lasted nearly 22 minutes—and one of Phish's quintessential versions of the Stevie Wonder favorite. The Vermont Quartet were a well-oiled machine by 1999 and about to reach a new level of commerical and cultural visibility thanks thanks to the 2000 release *Farmhouse*. There are moments throughout where it sounds as if they're about to stop and move on, only to start right back up again. It's the night's most playful and spontaneous moment, which set the tone for "Meatstick" a lengthy version that included its own "Meatstick-dance" tutorial for the fans who were unfamiliar. (In the pre-YouTube/streaming world, many indeed were likely novices.) Other second-set highlights included a stellar, 15-minute "Harry Hood" that was immediately followed by a powerful "Frankenstein." The encores of "Contact"> "Tweezer Reprise" put an exclamation point on the night, marking the first time that a show opened with Tweezer and concluded with the reprise. ***Mike Ayers***

The Gaslight Anthem
The '59 Sound Sessions
SIDEONEDUMMY

Most bands simply mark a landmark album anniversary by repackaging (and "remastering") the original with a bunch of outtakes and rarities. For the 10th anniversary of **The Gaslight Anthem**'s 2008 breakout *The '59 Sound*, the band skipped the first part, instead offering up a quick glimpse into that album's creation. The nine tracks that make up *The '59 Sound Sessions* were recorded months before the proper sessions took place, and they sound as fired up and as confident as ever. Youth and a recording budget can do that to you.

Early versions of rockers "Patient Ferris Wheel," "Miles Davis & the Cool," and the previously unreleased "Placeholder" find frontman **Brian Fallon**'s voice filled with exuberance, a quality that came to define this album. Another rarity, "Our Father's Sons," is a sentimental desert-country number, where Fallon sings about chain-gang choruses, weathering storms, and "moving on up to the east side." But the highlight of the set is a dark sounding version of the traditional folk song "God's Gonna Cut You Down," made popular by Johnny Cash. Fallon's voice is a bit distorted, surrounded by pianos and tambourines. It's not your typical Gaslight punch, but it's still a powerful one. Casual Gaslight fans are probably OK to skip this one, but, for those who want more insight into what sort of headspace the band was in during the *'59 Sound* era, *Sessions* certainly provides a quick, guitar-fueled window. ***Mike Ayers***

Grateful Dead
Fillmore West, San Francisco, CA 2/27/69 RHINO

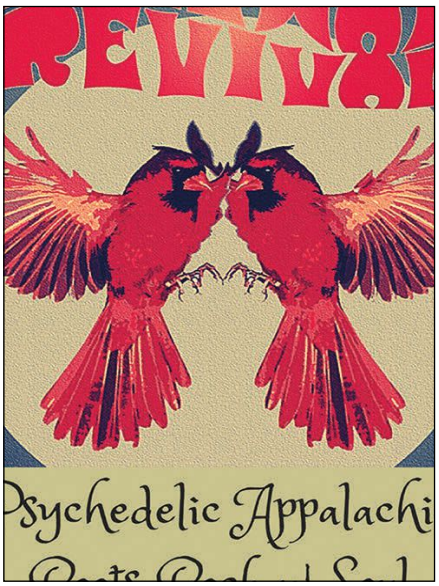
For this year's Record Store Day, the **Grateful Dead** released a 4-LP box set of one of their all-time classic Fillmore West performances, a vinyl pullout from the *Fillmore West 1969: The Complete Recordings* box set released on CD in 2005. On February 27, 1969, the band started what would become a legendary run at their breeding ground, with a handful of the performances from that night making it to official live releases soon after. "Dark Star" and "St. Stephen" were included on *Live/Dead*, their first ever live album, later that year and the 20-minute version of "That's It for the Other One" was officially released on 1999's *So Many Roads* box set.

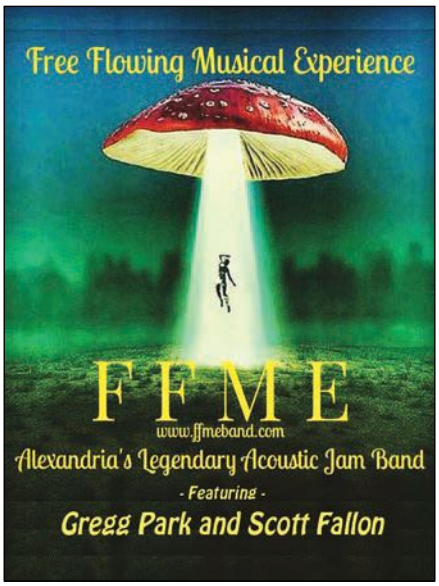
And that's just a way of saying that this show smoked from start to finish. The first set is just three songs long, but clocks in at nearly 40 minutes with a raw, bluesy "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" opener, followed by "Doin' That Rag" and "That's It for the Other One." Set two begins with a pair of sweet Garcia tunes, "Dupree's Diamond Blues" that segue into the elusive "Mountains of the Moon." The show closes with a powerful "The Eleven" and Turn on Your Lovelight" segue, with **Pigpen** in fine, rambling form.

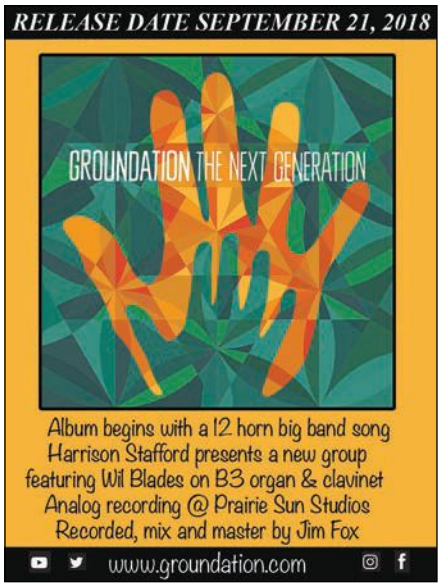
The Dead's Record Store Day releases are lovingly packaged LP sets and, if you don't mind one song per side at times, this is another nice addition to add to the collection. And like a lot of their box sets these days, this one is a limited run of 9,000 and eventually will be somewhat hard to find—though a recent trip to the record store a month after Record Store Day still yielded a few copies. ***Mike Ayers***

AUSTIN
COLÓN
DEBUT LP "THE PATH AHEAD"
AVAILABLE NOW!
www.austincolonmusic.bandcamp.com
"The Path Ahead is more than just an album, it's a musical masterpiece..." -Artist Reach
Listen On Spotify
Available on iTunes

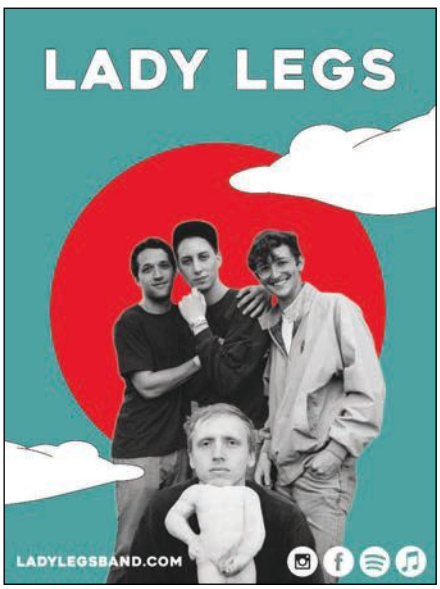
CURSE OF LONO
AS I FELL
THE NEW ALBUM
OUT AUGUST 17TH
FEATURING THE SINGLES VALENTINE
AND TELL ME ABOUT YOUR LOVE
curseoflonoband.com / @curseoflonoband
SUBMARINE CAT RECORDS


REVIV8
Psychedelic Appalachi

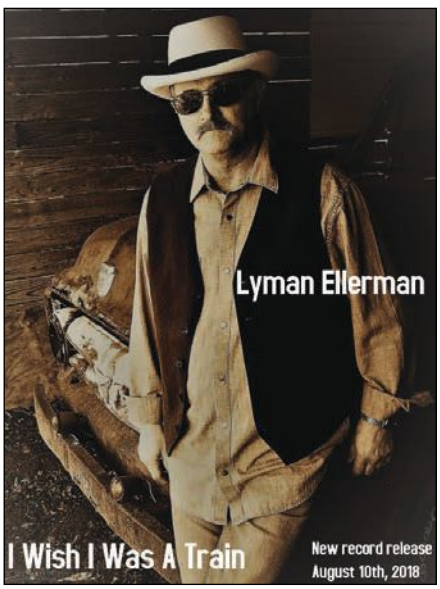

Free Flowing Musical Experience
FFME
www.ffmeband.com
Alexandria's Legendary Acoustic Jam Band
- Featuring -
Gregg Park and Scott Fallon

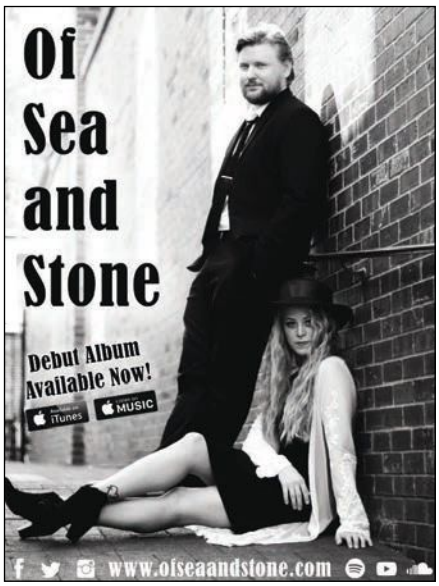

RELEASE DATE SEPTEMBER 21, 2018
GROUNDATION THE NEXT GENERATION
Album begins with a 12 horn big band song
Harrison Stafford presents a new group
featuring Wil Blades on B3 organ & clavinet
Analog recording @ Prairie Sun Studios
Recorded, mix and master by Jim Fox
www.groundation.com

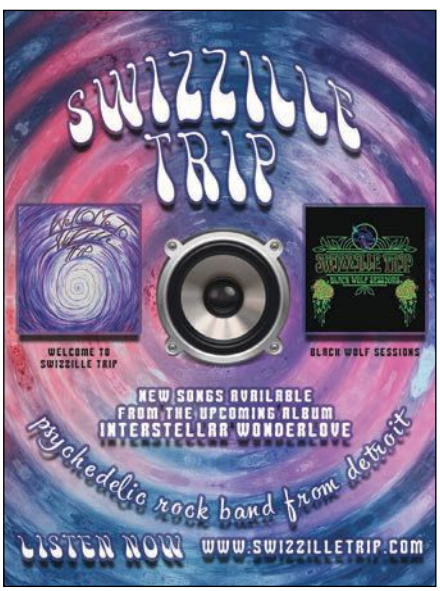
JOSH KING
INTO THE BLUE
JOSH KING
INTO THE BLUE
THE DEBUT ALBUM
AVAILABLE NOW
ON ALL MAJOR MUSIC OUTLETS
JOSHKINGNC.COM


LADY LEGS
LADYLEGSBAND.COM

LOOSE
STRINGS
BAND
theloosestringsband.com


Lyman Ellerman
I Wish I Was A Train
New record release
August 10th, 2018





Fractal Spirit

www.Fractal-Spirit.com

An artistic collective, an apparel and merchandise company.
Join our family at www.Fractal-Spirit.com for wholesale info contact us at Hello@Fractal-Spirit.com

Gratefully Yours

Etsy.com/shop/gratefullyyoursshop

Visit us at **Gratefully Yours** Shop on Etsy for awesome printed merchandise inspired to bring out the "Dead Head" in all of us. We offer a variety of unique designs on many different products from Pillow cases, T-shirts and Sweatshirts (in many different sizes, types and colors of tie dyes and solids), as well as custom designs with no minimum order sizes to take your event to the next level!

Soundwaves By Mordecai The Hawk

Sound Wave Wall Art/ Sound Diffuser crafted from recycled soft wood. Can be sound, voice or song based. Unique, bold, personalized art that screams your style.

www.etsy.com/shop/mordecaithehawk

www.woodsoundwaveart.com

thesent

Etsy.com/shop/thesent
stores.ebay.com/thesentoriginal/
www.facebook.com/rokuup/

thesent has a wide variety of high quality colorful prints from original art depicting musicians, entertainers and more. Great for gifts, music rooms, restaurants, man caves, offices or wherever you see fit.

The Overhead View

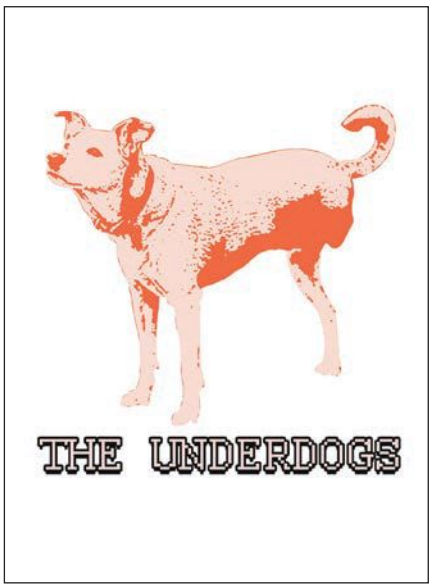
http://theoverheadview.etsy.com

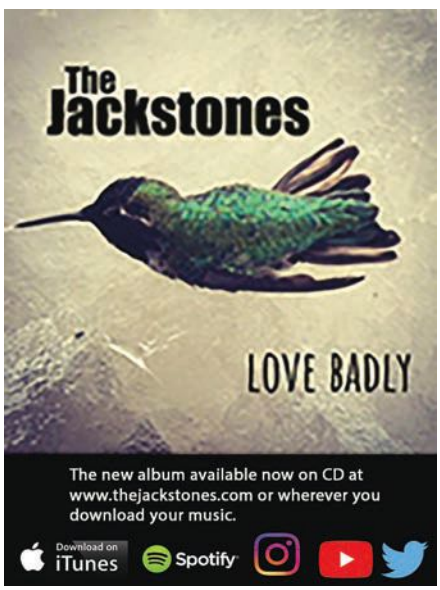
Miss something on summer tour? Don't worry, We've got you covered! Check out all of **The Overhead View**'s new 2018 designs (pictured) and over 30 more designs in styles and sizes for everyone. Enter RELIX18 and save 10%.

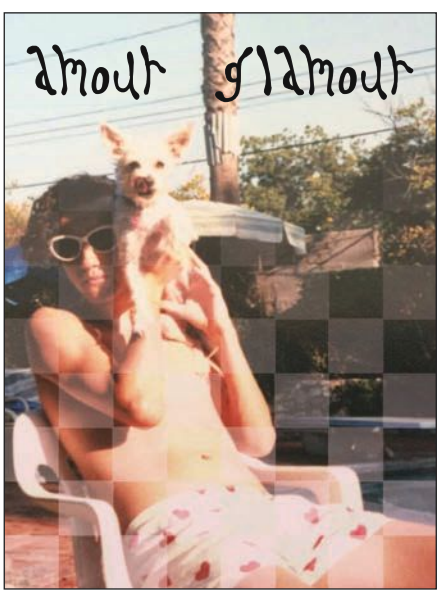
Manchester Hot Glass

We're a glass blowing studio & gallery in Manchester Vermont, open daily to the public. Shop our gallery, book a Glass-blowing class, order lighting! We offer a full line of hand blown glass & jewelry, made in-studio. Custom orders are our specialty, along with bridal party gifts & wedding registries.

manchesterhotglass.com





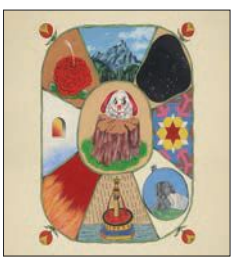


is a social experiment to see how far into my subconscious I was ripping off Styx. [*Laughs*.]

IT MIGHT GET DARK

The musical reference for "It Might Get Dark" is this record that I've been a huge fan of, *Born Again in the USA*. It's by this band called Loose Fur, which was Jeff Tweedy, Glenn Kotche and Jim O'Rourke. In my mind, it's every bit as good as *Yankee Hotel Foxtrot* or any of the Wilco records people celebrate. For some reason, not everybody knows this record, but it's one that I've listened to a ton. When we were on the road with Wilco, I was picking Jeff's brain about the production of that record and there were a couple of tunes where we lifted some production modes. The conversation that's happening between the filtered percussion, the piano and the acoustic guitar is very much a Jim O'Rourke production reference.

It's also based on this old riff that White Denim used to play called "Pretty Boys and Girls." We probably played it every night during our first three years, but rather than just record that old thing, which we still might, it's a nod to that idea. I wrote most of those lyrics right after the election, so I was in a state of shock and a little bit frustrated with myself and things in general.



SKY BEAMING

"Sky Beaming" is another one of Steve's. I still really don't understand it, even though I've played it a lot—he's just got such an interesting ear and way of writing parts. I can't really remember what his demo sounded like, but I really tried hard to push it into the territory of that Weather Report record *Black Market*. Our new keyboard player is a big Stevie Wonder guy. He's into stuff like Joe Zawinul, the Moog synthesizer Model D and Bernie Worrell. So that one was a softball for him because it came through and he just flew on it.

The lyrics to that one came out of an exercise. I bought this big chalkboard for the studio and instead of getting soundproofing material, like those wooden things that you see all over studios, I got bookshelves and brought in all my books and records and stuff like that. The idea of this record was to be a lot more collaborative and do more as a band in the room. That can be like pulling teeth with a group of grown men who watch too much TV. But for "Sky Beaming" I was like, "Let's take five books at random and I'm going to set this timer; you've got 30 seconds to pick two words out of each of these books and go write the two words on the chalkboard." So we filled up the chalkboard—and it's really big—and then we just started creating this map and connecting phrases that would come out of instruction manuals to different kinds of fiction and stuff like that. Then I built the lyrics to that tune from that exercise.

BACKSEAT DRIVER

We were going for something in between Stevie Wonder and Weather Report on the head of this tune, but it's mostly a Stevie Wonder nod in feel and production. "Backseat Driver" and "It Might Get Dark" were the first two tunes and, when I wrote them, I was in the same headspace and just skeptical.

The feel of the Les McCann tune, "Compared to What"—the *is it real or not at all* sentiment. That's been one of my favorite tunes for a long time. I'm trying to echo that sentiment as a reference to [Marvin Gaye's] "Inner City Blues" and "It Might Get Dark"—we're not making that music. We're not doing that kind of production, not making that kind of music necessarily, but I'm super connected to that. That's been my favorite stuff since I could drive. So we're just trying to align ourselves in a more spiritual way rather than in an overtly referential way.

GOOD NEWS

"Good News" is another one that Sam is on. "Fine Slime" and "Good News" are the only two that featured another guitar player on the record, and it can't get better than Sam. On that one, I just had that descending acoustic guitar thing that was kind of like the Doug Sahm song "I Don't Want to Go Home." It's a really beautiful song. So it's similar to that. I wanted to have a groovy, acoustic, sentimental-feeling tune, although it ended up rocking a lot harder than I had imagined.

Sam brought that lead part, and it kind of led us to the Swedish band Dungen. We mentioned that group a couple of times in the sessions—"Why don't we try to make it groovy like that." It's also a nod to Mayo Thompson; he was in this psychedelic band Red Krayola from Houston. On the front of the last record, we used this intro: "We're gonna have music..." and that bit is from a Red Krayola album ["Music" on *God Bless the Red Krayola and All Who Sail With It*]. He did a solo record that's brilliant called *Corky's Debt to His Father*—"Telephone, telephone, please end my blues" is a line from it [on "Horses"]. It's a great record, and I'm hoping that a little bit of it rubs off on our thing.

it is—Liam going into a tunnel in Los Angeles with the expensive strings we'd recorded for "Hold Her Close," playing them through a blaster box and recording them in a distressed manner with traffic noise. That happened because he had time to devise that plan on his own and follow through. I probably wouldn't have done that myself.

There is a seemingly intentional, aerated, silky tone within the songs and across the entire album.

NEIL: We put a lot of thought into how to create that cohesion, that feeling of unification. Obviously, there were some songs that were independent of any concept. In the construction of the album, the sequencing, what songs to actually leave on, we were aware of trying to create a listening experience that didn't jar you out of your feeling of revelry or dreaminess. In many cases, we are trying to evoke the feeling that you have when you are halfway between sleep and wakefulness. Obviously, the title relates to that. The music had an airiness, an ethereal quality. Not entirely, but as a listening experience, we wanted to keep people in that zone.

Would you say that this approach was, in effect, the concept of the album?

NEIL: There are some simpler songs, too: Liam's "Anger Plays a Part." Liam brought it as a finished song. It's a very simple, beautiful, elegant song. It seemed to fit the mood of the record and it was also a first take. Mick Fleetwood was there at the time and recorded that. Almost all the vocals are live. So, [the album] wasn't all pure cinematic indulgence.

What connection, if any, is there between Mick Fleetwood performing on the album and you joining Fleetwood Mac?

NEIL: I met Mick many, many years ago at a Linda McCartney benefit at [London's Royal] Albert Hall. We had a short but memorable conversation. We clicked, somehow. I think he's genuinely taken notice of the music I've made over the years. I'm a fan of Fleetwood Mac. Liam, in recent years, directed my attention to how great they are.

We got [Mick] into the studio and he contributed some great drums to three or four songs. We enjoyed each other's company and our families got close. It did have something to do with imagining that I might fit into his world. When he rang up to say, "Do you want to come and have a play?" it was a total shock for me. I was stunned. Certainly being friends with Mick was a huge part of me thinking it was a good idea.

Liam, you were born into Crowded House mania in the mid-1980s. What effect did that have on your decision to become a musician?

LIAM: It's hard to say. Kids are naturally drawn to music in those early years; playing drums and making noise is a pretty exciting, fun thing to do. I was very lucky to have a lot of instruments around and to have big kids around who were encouraging me to make noise and sing at the top of my lungs. I also got to see what dad was doing at the shows. Crowded House was a fun live band. They looked like they were having a lot of fun, and the joy they brought to people was a tangible energy. Why wouldn't I want to do that? At a young age, you don't see as much of the hard work and inner turmoil that can come with writing music, releasing records or being judged for things. I was smart enough, growing up, to know that my career wouldn't always go the same way dad's would. As much as I ever tried to rebel—in the '90s I was into grunge and punk and more experimental stuff—I still had a sense of melody and harmony, whether it was through nurture or genetics. I had the same appreciation for Beatle-esque harmonies and Neil Young-esque guitar.

Neil, how did it feel when it became apparent Liam was entering the family business?

NEIL: Like most parents, you try and foster and encourage things that seem to make your kids happy, and they're good at. There was clearly both applied to Liam. He was writing little songs when he was very young that already had a special quality to them. So, I never had any doubt that he had the talent. I knew that he was passionate about it. We didn't push. We did take him to a Russian piano teacher once to try and encourage him to learn piano, but his house smelled of cabbage too much, and Liam didn't want to go. I should've pushed him to keep going, even with the cabbage.

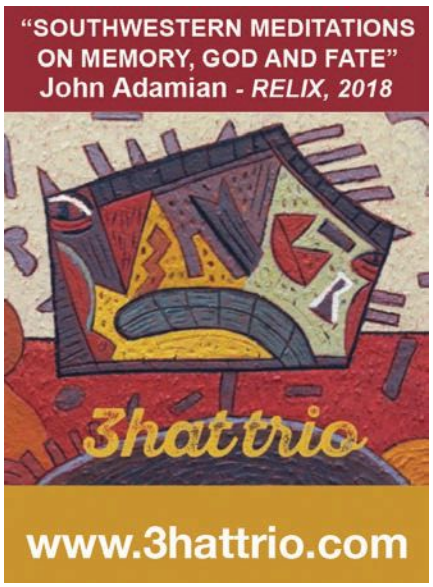
We would've liked to have had a doctor in the family, but that's alright. We can always go pay to see one. If Liam said he wanted to be an artist I'd be more worried. You've got to be in a room on your own. Or an actor—even worse. With music, you get a chance to have an audience. When we get onstage together, there is a great energy. I'm glad it worked out the way it has, that we waited this long to collaborate, because we have already amassed a lot of experience individually that we've been able learn from each other.

SUBSCRIBE TO RELIX MAGAZINE

John Oates . San Fermin . Tedeschi Trucks Band . Pond . Pegi Young . Old 97's
relix
PLUS
THE MAGPIE SALUTE
JESSI COLTER & LEROY KAYE
MEDESKI MARTIN & WOOD AT 25
Dead & Company

WWW.RELIX.COM/JOINUS

 Continued from page 59



FLOYD
YOGAJAM
ILLUMINATION
LABOR DAY WEEKEND
8/30 - 9/2 2018
4 DAY MUSIC • YOGA • ART FESTIVAL
FLOYD VIRGINIA
AWAKEN • CELEBRATE • DANCE
STRETCH • BLISS OUT • CONNECT • LET GO
Family friendly • Camping • Healing Oasis • Good Food
Art Classes • Nature Hikes • Singing • Kid Classes
Green Festival
Festival of Music, Movement & Magic
FLOYDYOGAJAM.NET
VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS

The Straight From the Vine Music Festival: **Huichica**

In June 2013, Bob Weir made a surprise appearance at California's Huichica Music Festival, joining his friend Jonathan Wilson for a few Grateful Dead tunes on a small stage situated on the grounds of the historic Gundlach Bundschu Winery. The sit-in marked Weir's first public performance since he collapsed onstage during a Furthur show at The Capitol Theatre a couple months before–and the moment cemented Huichica's position on more than a few music lovers' festival bucket lists.

Since its 2010 inception, Huichica West has gone against much of what festival culture has come to represent these days. Gundlach Bundschu's Jeff Bundschu helped found the festival, teaming up with Fruit Bats' Eric D. Johnson to curate a music, wine and food gathering that focuses on building unique, genuine experiences for every attendee and performer.

"Between the music, the vending and the fans, the idea was to create an environment where everyone was happy to be there together," Bundschu explains. "And by definition, that meant [it needed to be] intimate, by festival standards. That's what the model is. As a lifelong concertgoer and music lover, as much as I love the communal aspects of large-scale shows and festivals, I was burning out on the giant, thousands-of-people experiences, where the fans start to feel a little more like commodities."

This August, Huichica's promoters hosted their third-annual East Coast expansion festival in New York's Hudson Valley, an area of New York that Bundschu says shares a lot of aspects with Sonoma Valley, including, of course, quality wineries. And the integration of wine and music has been a driving factor throughout the past decade of Huichica.

"Wine has never been about just drinking it and looking at it," Bundschu says. "It's about the people you're sharing it with, and it's about enjoying the environment. In wine, you tend to think about smell and taste. And in music, it's hearing; at festivals, it's sight. It's never been lost on us that you can cross-pollinate those things."

Huichica and Bundschu partnered with California promotors (((folkYEAH!))) in 2012, a seemingly perfect fit of two grassroots organizations creating boutique experiences for music fans. They spend a considerable amount securing the right vendors, locking in people who are excited about their products and involved in the company. The intimacy of Huichica–which caps out at about 1,500 attendees–is the highlight of the event though, and Bundschu prides himself on the sort of lasting memories that his festivals have created for music fans throughout the years.

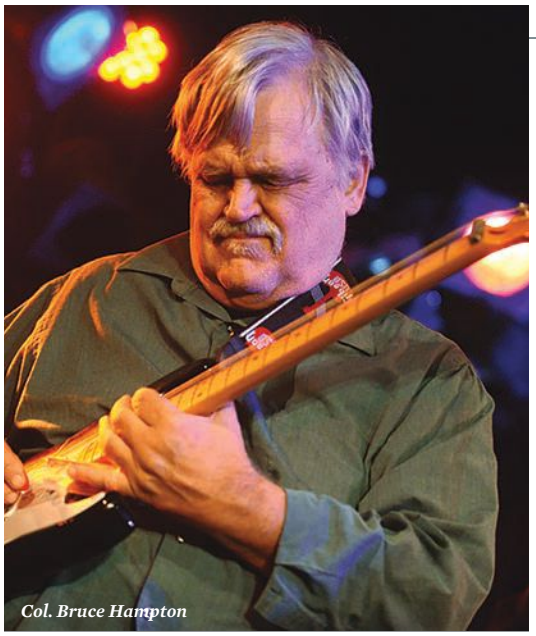
"I've been going to SXSW as a fan for many, many years, and what I love about that is: No matter how much you plan an itinerary, you could set your watch to the fact that your most awe-inspiring experience will be a band that you didn't even know you were gonna see, in a place you didn't expect," Bundschu says, pointing out recent Huichica performers like Kyle Craft and Lia Ices as unexpectedly jaw-dropping performers. "It's just about those experiences where you're like, 'Am I really seeing this? Am I really that close to this artist?' We're blessed that it happens any time we throw one of these things." ***Matt Inman***

Huichica

Tales of Musical Ominvores: **SiriusXM's Grateful Dead Channel**

"Being a Deadhead isn't really an accomplishment, it's an experience," Gary Lambert says with a laugh. Lambert, the longtime co-host of the weekly *Tales from the Golden Road* program on SiriusXM's Grateful Dead Channel, then adds, "Of course, it's an experience I love sharing."

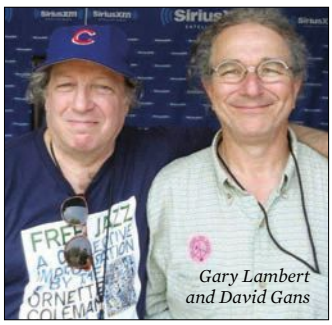
Lambert has been on air since January 2008, when his friend David Gans invited him to join the channel several months after it launched. Over a decade later, the two are still at it, reflecting on all things Grateful Dead (and more), with fellow fans and musicians, including the members of the band.


Col. Bruce Hampton

great roll-and-roll and folk. I think that's what made the Grateful Dead so attractive to me. They did not derive from a single source, they were as omnivorous as musicians can be in terms of other influences. When I first heard the Grateful Dead, I said, 'This is like all the music I've ever loved being played at once. It's been gratifying to see the enduring power of the music."

Gans affirms, "As Gary and I often say on the air, it's a pleasure and a privilege to be part of this."

Dean Budnick


Gary Lambert and David Gans

Gans recalls, "In 2007, I was honored to be invited to consult on the design of a 24/7 Grateful Dead Channel on Sirius Satellite Radio (now SiriusXM). We took a pretty straightforward approach: three complete concerts each day, a 'this day in history' feature (hosted by archivist David Lemieux), some 'roots and branches' material in the library, and the best of the live and studio recordings. A few months after we went live, the management invited me and Gary Lambert to host a call-in show, which we named *Tales from the Golden Road*. That has proven to be a very popular feature. And with the recent addition of *The Big Steve Hour* (featuring longtime Dead roadie Steve Parish), we've added even more interaction with our wonderful audience."

Lambert's initial connection to the music of the Grateful Dead was serendipitous, like that of many Deadheads. "I first literally stumbled upon them in Central Park on May 5, 1968. I was going to a free concert by Jefferson Airplane and as it turned out the Paul Butterfield Blues Band were opening. The Airplane played, and then they said, 'Stick around, the Grateful Dead are coming up next.' That was the one way sign into the rabbit hole for me. I grew up listening to just about all types of music: jazz and roots, 20th century American avant garde, and a lot of

The North Star: **Col. Bruce Hampton**

Col. Bruce Hampton followed his own path throughout his long, cosmic journey, right up until the end when he collapsed onstage and passed away soon after his own 70th birthday celebration. Born in Knoxville, Tenn., the guitarist, songwriter and seeker first made waves as the visionary behind the Hampton Grease Band and the Aquarium Rescue Unit, serving as a musical patriarch. His roster of disciples reads like a who's who of the jam world: Jimmy Herring, Oteil Burbridge, Derek Trucks and many more.

Brandon "Taz" Niederauer was his final student. According to the then-14-year old guitar prodigy, he first met the Colonel on Jam Cruise 2014. Taz was, remarkably, still in elementary school at the time, and he remained under The Colonel's tutelage until the day he passed. "In such a short amount of time, he did so much for me," Taz recalls. "He taught me that if at least one person is moved by your playing or if you make one person happy, that's when you've done your job." Taz's final performance with The Colonel came on that fateful April evening in 2017, when Herring, Peter Buck, Dave Schools, Jon Fishman, John Popper, Susan Tedeschi, Warren Haynes and others gathered to celebrate his 70th birthday.

Thinking back, Taz knew there was something in the air that night at the Fox Theatre. "It was so magical," he says. "The stage shook. Everyone in the audience was going crazy." As the all-star collective launched into their final song of the night—the raucous "Turn on Your Lovelight"—The Colonel looked over his shoulder and signaled Taz to show the crowd his chops. As his final student took his solo, Col. Bruce Hampton collapsed. He was later taken to a local Atlanta hospital, where he officially passed away.

The unreal circumstances surrounding Col. Bruce Hampton's death have since entered the realm of legend. "Once I got past the sad part, I told myself that if he were to write how his life would go, that was exactly how he would want to go out," Taz affirms.

Today, Hampton lives on through those who have been touched by his music and his kindness. Musical tributes to his legacy are a regular occurrence, and his image is reproduced and revered to saint-like proportions. As for Taz, he still thinks of his mentor on a daily basis. Recently, he even got the visage of Col. Bruce etched into the front of his amplifier. "The Colonel has had more of an impact on me than anybody else in the music world," Taz says. "I just want to convey that in my music."

Raffaela Kenny-Cincotta

Bonus Track: **John Mayer's Typewriter**

Let's close out the Relix 44 by taking things deep with a quality geek out. No, not a disquisition on the best "Dark Star" of all-time. Isn't that settled? 2/27/69. Or 2/13/70, 5/11/72, 8/27/72, 11/11/73, 10/18/74, 3/29/90, or 10/31/91 or... OK, maybe that's not settled, nor should it be.

Similarly, it can be tough for certain folks to identify whether they prefer: Olympia SM8, IBM Selectric I, Hermes 3000, Smith-Corona Classic 12, Olivetti Lettera 25 or an Underwood Noiseless Portable.

That's right, it's time for some entrancing typewriter talk.

This past January, John Mayer

John Mayer's Olympia SM3

affirmed that he not only tears it up on guitar, but he also has an affinity for keys. Mayer, who appears in the wonderful documentary *California Typewriter*, called for "a return to naturalism," encouraging folks to send him "a one page, properly formatted letter (formal or informal) and I will reply to a few every morning."

For many folks there is no replacing the tactile, auricular sensations of the typewriter, and, as Tom Hanks wrote in the *New York Times*, "No one throws away typewritten letters, because they are pieces of graphic art with a singularity equal to your fingerprints, for no two manual typewriters print precisely the same. E-mails disappear from all but the servers of Google and the N.S.A. No one on the planet has yet to save an Evite. But pull out a 1960s Brother De Luxe 895, roll in a sheet of paper and peck out, "That party was a rocker! Thanks for keeping us dancin' till quarter to three," and 300 years from now that thank-you note may exist in the collection of an aficionado who treasures it the same as a bill of sale from 1776 for one dozen well-made casks from Ye Olde Ale Shoppe."

So too, John Mayer explains:

I've been using a typewriter since 2010 when I began writing for what would become the Born and Raised *album. My first was a new Brother electric, on which you'd just hit the key and WHIP-BOOM, a motor would take care of the letter press for you. When the legendary typewriter enthusiast and actor Tom Hanks caught wind of this, he sent me my first manual typewriter, an old Olympia SM3. From the moment I fed a sheet of paper into it, I could understand his insistence that I have one; there's nothing like typing on a manual machine. I'll spare you the hipster proselytizing, but believe me when I say there's nothing like the joy of using an old typewriter in good condition, nor is there anything quite like receiving a letter composed on one.*

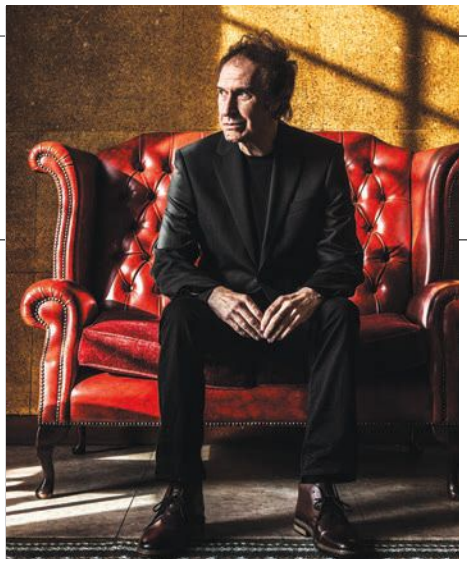
This is one of my favorites, an SM3 with a script type face. (They weren't all what we now refer to as "typewriter font.") It's like an old Mercedes convertible. Good music, a cup of coffee, and a stack of paper —and you're off to a part of your mind no phone or laptop could ever take you.

One last thing about typewriters—they force directness and class in your writing. A '50s script Olympia isn't the forum to type "hey what's up? Wanna hang soon?" Rather, you'll find yourself writing with your fanciest turns-of-phrase, and with zero clutter. Fancy, but to the point. Just like these old Olympia machines.

Dean Budnick

RAY DAVIES

By MIKE GREENHAUS



RAY DAVIES CAN pinpoint the moment he awoke from the American dream. It was 1965, and the Kinks were on the verge of rivaling The Rolling Stones and The Beatles, thanks to a successful international tour and a series of influential early garage-rock singles, when they were banned from performing across the pond for four years by the American Federation of Musicians. Over five decades later, the exact reasons for the ban remain fuzzy—Davies points to an incident on the set of Dick Clark's *Where the Action Is* show—but the sudden shift caused the English outfit to look to their homeland for inspiration, resulting in a new sound that moved away from American-rooted blues, R&B and rock. And, though that embrace of folk music, pastoral imagery and a decidedly British dialect resulted in era-defining albums like 1968's *The Kinks Are the Village Green Preservation Society*, the ban stunted the group's growth in the country that inspired Davies to play music in the first place.

"When the British Invasion started, with The Beatles and all these bands from the U.K., people saw it as a threat to their culture," Davies says. "Particularly the more conservative areas of America."

The Kinks returned to the U.S. in the late-1960s and Davies has continued to perform overseas throughout his solo career, yet his relationship with America remains complicated. In 2004, he was shot in the leg during a robbery while living in New Orleans and, a few years later, he started documenting his exploits in "the land of the free" for his book, *Americana*. "I wanted to focus on the old days—our tours in America," Davies says. "And I wanted it to encapsulate the journey back after we were banned. We started from scratch after having many hits all around the world. So I documented that journey, which culminated in learning from that shock."

Recently, he's also used that 2013 travelogue as the basis for two studio albums, 2017's *Americana* and this year's more "storytelling"-oriented sequel *Our Country — Americana Act II*. Though he started writing the albums before Brexit and the 2016 Presidential Election, the LPs double as commentaries on the current wave of nationalism sweeping through Western politics. "A song like 'Our Country' is about a country observing nationalities to develop an identity," he says. "I've been told it's very appropriate for now."

Our Country — Americana Act II also arrives as Davies is preparing to reunite the Kinks for the first time since 1996. In an interview with *The Telegraph* in June, Davies revealed that he plans to record a batch of new material with his brother Dave and Mick Avory and even play a few Kinks shows. Davies was partially inspired to revive his legendary band after seeing the Stones but, unlike that ever "professional" outfit, Davies admits that "the Kinks will probably be playing the local bar."

Coming of age in the U.K., what was your gateway to the American experience?

In the late-'50s, the great cowboy Western country films, the heroes of the Wild West, symbolized the American Dream. That's when I saw the recklessness, the freedom of America. That pioneer spirit really inspired me—it fits quite well into rock-and-roll, and one of the reasons I went there is because it symbolized the musical freedom that we didn't have growing up in London after the second World War in the 1950s and 1960s. There was food-rationing in Britain, and America came with its cars and its music—its new styles and shopping mall symbolized a new world.

Along with guitarist Bill Shanley, The Jayhawks back you on both *Americana* and *Our Country*. What led you to them?

I was going to get my usual studio musicians from England, but there's a telepathy between bands like The Jayhawks that's unique. On the new record, they play slightly out of their comfort zone which attests to their flexibility. There's a song on the album called "The Take," where the character meets this incredible woman in St. Paul, Minn. There's a song by Johnny Cash called "Big River"—"I met her accidentally in St. Paul, Minnesota"—so I used the analogy of meeting this woman in the Midwest. Midwestern music is very hard and can be brutal with big backbeats. The band enjoyed playing that one because they're based in Minnesota.

You've said that this album cycle is more about the "American emotion" than our country itself.

It's about the sensibility and the emotion involved in Americana music. It's all about the aspiration in people and that anybody has the ability to be president—anybody can achieve. I saw rock-and-roll and the blues, in particular, as opportunities to succeed and express oneself. But we got banned from America. In fact, they cut us off in our prime. That sounds quite depressing and I suffered through quite a bad, emotional time. But what I did instead was I put together *The Kinks Are the Village Green Preservation Society,* and I wrote new material that really explored England.

What cultural changes did you notice when the Kinks returned to America?

When we first toured America in 1965, before we got banned, most of the other groups we played with—The Beach Boys and Paul Revere & the Raiders—were clean-cut. American bands had very short records and they looked, dare I say, very tidy. When we returned, people like the Mothers of Invention and Frank Zappa and Captain Beefheart were being radical. American music really developed into rock-and-roll.

You include a 1971 Kinks song, "Oklahoma U.S.A" on this record. What was the process like of reworking that state-specific number for this travelogue-like journey?

I refer to that song in the book because it was originally about my older sister, who left school when she was 14. She went to work in a factory and her form of escape was the great cowboy Western movies. The point was that something special was waiting to happen. I wanted it to sound quite naturalistic.

Alex Lake

- RELIX PRESENTS -

HALLOWEEN AT BROOKLYN BOWL LAS VEGAS

FRIDAY, OCT 26

LEFTOVER SALMON

LATE SHOW

TUESDAY, OCT 30

AN EVENING WITH:

DAWES

PASSWORDS TOUR

WEDNESDAY, OCT 31

THE MOTET

LATE SHOW

THU, NOV 1 - SAT, NOV 3

THE DISCO BISCUITS

LATE SHOWS

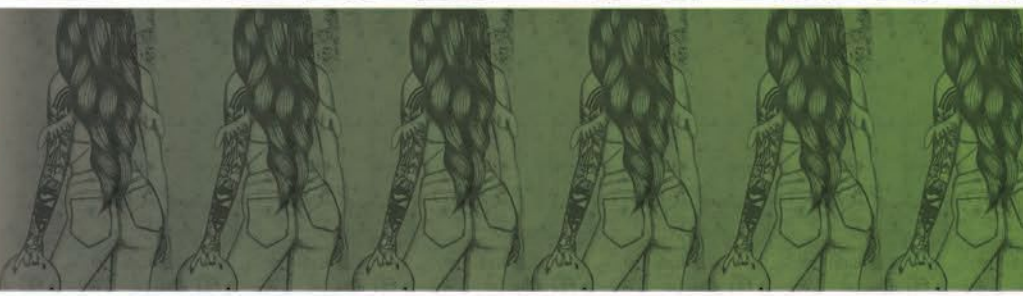
FRIDAY, NOV 2

LUNCH YOU IN THE EYE

BOWLING TOURNAMENT + PHANART SHOW

feat. OUR PHAN-FRIENDLY LUNCH MENU

MATINEE SHOW



SATURDAY, NOV 3

KELLER WILLIAMS' PETTYGRASS

feat. THE HILLBENDERS

MATINEE SHOW

BROOKLYN BOWL LAS VEGAS

CENTER STRIP AT THE LINQ

BROOKLYNBOWL.COM / 702.862.BOWL

HEADING TO RED ROCKS THIS FALL? HITCH A RIDE WITH CID COLORADO!

Sept 7 & 8 - STS9 • **Sept 13** - The Revivalists • **Sept 14** - Gov't Mule
Sept 17 - Punch Brothers • **Sept 22** - Greensky Bluegrass • **Sept 24 & 25** - Beck

For the full Shuttles to Red Rocks schedule visit

RRXSHUTTLES.COM

** CID Entertainment acts as a transportation broker and utilizes fully licensed and permitted transportation vendors to provide vehicles and drivers.*